THE COMMONWEAL

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SOUNDINGS IN MYSTERY

THERE is no better proof of the sway which scientific habits of mind now exercise over us than the fact that we are not annoyed by what may be termed the pretensions of science. It is all very well for people with microscopes and mathematical principles to go about finding out the truth concerning the world in which we live. Whenever they discover a fact, mankind must perforce accept as much of it as can be assimilated. Sometimes the individual absorption apparatus does not function properly. People like Bishop Barnes, whose declarations have again stirred Anglicanism, tend to forget that a geological or anthropological discovery is not an explanation of the universe but only something which makes the universe more difficult to understand. Thus, in days prior to the investigations of prehistoric man, the origin of the race could be accounted for very simply by the theory that it had been the result of a creative act which happened some six thousand years ago. Today this theory seems impossibly naïve. What has superseded it does not as yet, however, explain. The concept of development, as something taking place during "millions of years," merely renders it tremendously difficult to understand the progress of history. Records are pitifully meagre, we have very little beyond physical evidence for the presence of man. Science has not, therefore, destroyed the work expended upon perfecting a metaphysical synthesis of human destiny and history. It has simply revealed the tremendous proportions of that work.

One cannot help being slightly irritated, as a result, by the peculiar condescension which eminent and well-meaning scientists still display when there is talk of other "realms" than their own. Sir Oliver Lodge, for instance, commenting in the New York Times Magazine upon the recent deliberations of British scientists, ends a narrative of "progress" with these words: "We shall go on to realize that above and beyond these forces which are physical but not material are mental and spiritual realities, to most of which our temporary absorption in matter has made us blind." There is nothing very new in this remark. Herbert Spencer had already said the same thing very effectively in the final pages of the initial section of First Principles—pages which, it is true, defined the domain of religion as that which is "scientifically unknowable" and thus gave rise to numerous misconceptions. Doubtless all this is better than the frightfully stupid monism of people like Haeckel, for whom a cell was packed with the whole of dogma. But why must we wait for science to assure us that our panorama of the universe is not bounded by electron paths?

We have known this all along. From the very be-

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ginning mankind has been confronted with realities exclusively its own—forces having no counterpart outside the breast of man, and yet being so absolutely in need of control that men of the rarest genius devoted their lives to finding some kind of recipe. The success of natural reason in speculating upon the inner dynamism of the human creature is testified to by the long sequence of speculation extending from the religious guesses of primitives through Indian mysticism, Greek philosophy and Christian wisdom to the threshold of the modern scientific era. This development is fully comparable from the point of view of depth and definiteness with the progress of scientific research; the conclusions it established are at least equally reliable; and the beneficent results it brought about—peace, courage, confidence—are immeasurably greater. And certainly the whole of this marvelous achievement (awe-inspiring even if estimated only in terms of human energy) was never simply tossed into a waste-basket and forgotten. Why, then, say to us that science has at length come to surmise there may be "other realms" than the laboratory? It is quite as if a citizen of Copenhagen should suddenly arise to remark that there are other cities besides his own.

The point raised is certainly of supreme importance in so far as the mere intellectual and cultural development of humanity is concerned. We cannot amass a fortune of insight if we insist upon throwing away what has already been accumulated. In fact, we have not got on. Scientific investigation has, it is true, brought to light ever so much information about the human being and his characteristics. Much more is known today regarding psychological facts than our ancestors had any way of finding out. Studies of the relationship between "mind and matter," of the subconscious, of the primitive person, have been carried very far with remarkable effect. And yet many contemporary theorizers, like their predecessors of the two last centuries, get no farther when they try to offer a general account than did the Sophists whose crude guesses prepared the way for such masters as Aristotle and Saint Augustine. Indeed it has been necessary for Hans Driesch—acting simply in the interests of science itself—to complete a refutation of such an impossible old notion as psycho-physical parallelism; for a great priest like Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt (whose jubilee, by the way, is being observed this year) to come to the rescue of common-sense in the field of ethnology; and for a sociologist like Max Scheler to rescue ethical convictions from a stupid classification as "habits."

No difference exists between the disaster occasioned by scientists who speak patronizingly of philosophical and mystical investigation, and that brought upon our heads by philosophers who rumble on in blissful ignorance of science. It may be that knowledge of the "whole of reality" is too vast for man to attain. But that anybody should deliberately shunt out portions of that reality competently explored is a calamitous manifestation of ignorance. The matter becomes extremely important, of course, when the bearing of thought and knowledge upon religion is concerned. Certainly religion must be able to prove its case to the satisfaction of those asked to believe. The evidence it presents must be genuine and convincing. But it so happens that the synthesis proposed by religion is the most necessary and intimate available to man. It is the coördination of humanity and destiny. It is the path between the individual and his goal. To think that it can be "found" after we have discovered microbes and ether currents to our heart's satisfaction, or that it can wait until we have finished exploring these things, is to profess an unutterably naïve view of the human problem.

And there are such inconceivably naïve views. Christ impressed upon His followers over and over again the principle that "one thing alone is necessary." All the rest is valuable, worthy of human effort, intrinsically good. But without this "one thing" all the rest is like currency minus any face value. And if some say that through science we shall come to religion, what does this mean excepting that religious truths and religious authority are secondary to scientific truths and scientific authority? How false this formula is can be demonstrated in many ways, including contemporary experience. "The mistake of the modern world and intelligence as such," Jacques Maritain said recently, "has been to believe that the rule of reason over nature could be assured in denying the rule of the supernatural over reason. In this way the hierarchy of values has been destroyed, and today intelligence is paying the penalty. Society likewise. For it is the secret essence of that supremacy of the material which oppresses us now that that which is the spirit of grace has been exiled from our intellectual and social life, from all of what is preëminently human. We must oppose to this supremacy not merely the rights of the intelligence and the reason, but verily also the supremacy of Divine grace, the primacy of the spiritual." We must, that is, if there is any reason for trying to avoid a tumble back into chaos.

Science, yes. "We can be sure," Father Bede Jarrett writes, for instance, "that what is true in science will reappear in the Catholic creed." It would certainly be ridiculous to become indignant because we had found out something new about the universe—even if it implied reshaping a few of our pet assertions. But there is also every reason to remember that long before we ever had science in the modern sense, we had the vast, wide rooms of the spiritual—rooms in which it was natural, even inevitable, for us to live, we human beings. We found out a good many priceless things in those rooms. We have sounded mysteries there. We shall be glad if science leads many people back into them, but we shall certainly not go outside and wait for permission to return. After all, the height of absurdity would be to render activity of the soul contingent on a signal from Mr. Bertrand Russell.

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WEEK BY WEEK

HOW determined an effort is to be made by the Coolidge administration to recover prestige lost during recent years in Latin America is evident from preparations to endow the attendance of the United States at the next Pan-American Congress with unusual significance and splendor. The President is expected to deliver the opening address and to "pave the way" for declarations upon policy and good will to be made by Secretary Kellogg and the official delegates. Among these last are men whom we consider excellent missionaries for the cause of decent relationships throughout the whole American world. Mr. Hughes, whose work as Secretary of State was distinguished by nothing so much as his grasp of problems relating to countries south; the Honorable Morgan O'Brien, exceptionally competent in this field of international law; Mr. Henry Fletcher, whose experience and ability mark him as one of the foremost among our diplomatic officers—these and other men of distinction constitute a delegation superior to any we have ever sent abroad. One believes that the situation earnestly requires them; and one hopes—perhaps with comparative optimism—that their presence in Havana during the coming January may constitute the beginning of a new and more coöperative era in Pan-American relations.

FOLLOWING what seems to be becoming an established and sanctioned custom, the parties directly concerned in the incidents which have caused the abandonment of the Fall-Sinclair case at Washington have *refused to speak for fear of incrimination*, and as we expect and trust that the affair will have its repercussion in a sterner court, their exact responsibility must still be regarded as "sub judice." Enough is matter of record, however, for us to ask ourselves what is the exact status before the law of these detective bureaus, the services of which money is permitted to hire, and the function of which is to harass and scrutinize the lives of citizens under no legal suspicion whatsoever, but whose daily movements have suddenly become of personal importance to wealthy and interested parties. How far are these activities "recognized"? How far has the assistance which private detective bureaus occasionally give the regular detective force invested them with any right to call upon the law for help under circumstances easy to imagine?

WE ARE facing a very disturbing situation. As the New York Times remarked in its comment after the matter had become public, it is not the jury system, effectively guarded by the right of challenge, which is on trial. "It is the effort, inexplicable save on the basest motives, to put a net of inquisition around the habits and relations, the associates and friends, the business and property, of most members of the jury." Are we about to be indulged with the spectacle of wealth openly and brazenly arrayed against justice? If so, the result need not be considered doubtful. It is always some man or group with whom all sense of decency and worldly caution have perished as the result of continued immunity, who commit the irreparable act that brings their edifice about their ears. The old saw still holds good that men go crazy before the gods write them off as a loss.

THAT there was great rejoicing in Rome over the arrival of Monsignor Hayasaka, soon to be consecrated the first native Japanese bishop, goes without saying. The trend of history has restored the concept of "orbis terrarum" to the Church as something more of a reality than a theory. Pope Pius XI has communicated to us all some of his enthusiasm for the universality of Christendom, which can never be the exclusive property of one nation or one culture. We in America may rightly rejoice in the fact that, just as the Catholic faith has succeeded in developing here in perfect harmony with constitutional and cultural institutions, so also the day is dawning when the Church will be perfectly acclimated in Japan. To this news one must add the hope expressed by the Holy Father that it may be possible next year to announce the consecration of a Negro bishop. Such an event would, there is reason to believe, be complementary to the canonization of an American Negro saint. Ecclesiastical investigation is now in course to determine whether the Blessed Martin de Porres, a Peruvian Dominican who died in 1639, may be raised to the honors of the altar. This holy man, venerated by thousands at the time of his death, had a Spanish

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father and a Negro mother. The story of his life is most interesting and instructive. Who can doubt that veneration of him as a saint, if that is found meet, will have a beneficent influence upon us all?

THE latest news of the historic fight between Mayor Thompson and King George is the discovery that Chicago is without the services of a superintendent of schools. "Representatives of twenty-nine civic organizations"—probably just an indication of the vast numerical reserves upon which the crafty House of Hanover can draw—have declared that the trial of Dr. McAndrew isn't getting anywhere. In fact, they even go so far as to assert the triviality of what the august and irresponsible "Board" has been listening to, and to declare that the "original charges have not been argued." Meanwhile, they ask, who is taking care of the schools?—a question which surely reveals the cunning and deviousness of the pestilential forces against which the guardian of Chicago has arrayed himself and his widely-read associates. For when the issue becomes whether or not bon-bons can be shipped from Buckingham Palace to the outskirts of the world's greatest railway terminal, who but a wily foe would arise and complain that his children weren't being educated? "A jolly smoke-screen, my lords," is His Highness's comment, no doubt. But talk about slates and pencils when the country is in danger will simply make every honest, able-bodied patriot see deep red—and play politics harder than ever.

DISCUSSION of tax reduction, annually a lively event, comes at a time when the good fortune which has been smiling upon the United States displays every promise of continued residence. Large individual disturbances, such as the inactivity of the Ford plant and the reduction of nearly a million in the number of automobiles sold, have not materially impaired the status of commerce. The tightening up which has been noticeable in quotations of prices for securities and commodities seems, in the opinion of various authorities, to have gone about as far as is practicable. Meanwhile Secretary Mellon's plan to effect a tax reduction of about a quarter of a billion dollars has been attacked from two sides. The United States Chamber of Commerce demands a cut of nearly double the sum proposed, and in addition to asking a lower corporation tax suggests the removal of produce, amusement and automobile taxes. On the other hand, the American Farm Bureau Federation is arguing that the profits of prosperity ought to go toward decreasing the national debt. It regards interest paid annually by the government on the nation's debts as offsetting any relief from possible tax reduction.

ONE sees that, in general, the correctness of Secretary Mellon's plan is vouched for by the fact that it virtually effects a compromise between the two opposition camps. Approval grows when the steps proposed are analyzed in detail. The farmers' argument may be met by saying first that the national debt has been reduced steadily during the past few years, and second, that government obligations are of considerable value under existing financial conditions. Beyond that, the classes of income affected by the reduction rulings proposed by the Treasury are simply those passed over in the previous revision of the tax schedule. It is difficult to see how any reasonable objection can be made against bringing surtaxes on medium-sized incomes into line with the rest of the list. Similarly, cutting off 1½ percent from the corporation tax is altogether equitable if viewed in the light of the existing schedule as a whole. Probably the stiffest fight will center round the automobile and theatre taxes. We agree with Secretary Mellon that there is no more reason why a motorist should escape being made to help pay for federal highways than why railroads should be exempt from turning over part of their earnings to the government. The theatre tax, for its part, has never been popular. One may well wonder, however, if removal of this levy would actually mean lower box-office prices. Suffice it to say, by way of conclusion, that the Treasury program seems about as sensible a solution of the problem as any that can be hoped for.

THE annoying disturbance caused in Rhode Island by attempts on the part of Elphege Daignault to control the disbursement of parish funds has now arrived at a new stage. Once again the Superior Court has ruled that moneys collected by the Church may be used for legitimate ecclesiastical purposes which may not have been in the minds of the donors. We outlined the entire situation in these columns some time ago, and need merely state here that the root of the dissatisfaction which has guided Daignault and his followers is the fact that French-American money is being used to build "English" high-schools. At bottom, therefore, the problem is (to use a much-tried word once again) nationalistic in character. Such disagreements over money are not unusual in the history of the American Church, although they seldom emerge clad in the grotesque emotionalism of Mr. Daignault. The problem of how to handle them effectively is always great, and has given churchmen no end of worry. Only time, not words, can dispel the group clannishness fostered by the immigration epoch. Fortunately, one can already see, in numerous places, that time does its work thoroughly and well. We need our heritages, Irish, German, French, Polish, Italian, but we need even more to advance the work of the Church in America in an American way.

INDIANA'S cup of humiliation has been filled full within the past two years, and it is small wonder if, as reported by the New York Sun, a moral revulsion on the part of its voters is threatening to void the whole dirty contents and to scour the vessel for a

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cleaner filling. Thanks to its complaisance toward the Ku Klux Klan, with its promise of a white Protestant America, the state that was being hailed two decades ago as a new centre of intelligence and literary achievement has seen its Republican boss a life prisoner for a foul and brutal murder, the head of its Anti-saloon League a resident of the state penal farm, its capital city the scene of strong-arm methods that recall South American politics at their most primitive, and its name and fame pilloried in the enlightened press of the union. So far as merit for the general housecleaning can be attributed to one man, Boyd Curley, the editor of the Indianapolis Times, seems to deserve it. It was through his tireless efforts, the Sun correspondent reminds us, that the contents of the "black box" which have "torn things loose" at last became public. Indiana Republicans, the correspondent reports, are having difficulty in finding a gubernatorial candidate with none of the dirt on his hands. His political convictions apart, it seems to us the Hoosier state might do worse than see what Editor Curley thinks about his own capacity for the job.

ONE knows very well that what used to be termed "modernism" has not disappeared from the religious scene. Outside the Church it is, perhaps, more widely diffused than ever before. But among Catholics it exists now only as an historical memory, to which the aura of menace is not attached. This fact becomes clear when one looks back at the "Congress of the History of Christianity," organized recently to honor the seventieth birthday of Loisy, now professor in the Collège de France. Not a single eminent scholar was in attendance; and though Harnack's name figured in the honorary committee, he did not go to Paris for the occasion. The "Congress" was, therefore, a singularly mediocre affair, at which Loisy (who remains a genuine scholar despite his aberrations) must have felt very lonely. Just as marked as was the abstention of historical authorities from this jubilee festival is the disappearance of modernistic literature, in the form so prevalent prior to 1908, from publishers' lists. Perhaps it is still possible that Loisy, once an eminent priest and a believer in divine grace, may come to realize that neither goodness nor grace was with him. Certainly one hopes so.

THE "Eagle of Meaux," Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, whose tercentenary has just been celebrated in France, has come down to us in history as a great, it may be, the greatest, pulpit orator, and the glory of the old Gallican Church. What is not so often remembered is that he was a great theologian, perhaps the last in direct descent of an illustrious line, and that, as in the case of nearly all the doctors of the Church, the moral problem of riches and poverty never ceased to exercise his mind. An article by the French Catholic writer and academician, M. Georges Goyau, in the last number to reach us of La Vie Catholique, entitled Bossuet and the Poor Man, shows very clearly that the Bishop of Meaux was at no pains to dilute his convictions to meet the taste of the fine birds, male or female, who made the palace of Versailles their aviary. "The rule of the Church in this respect," he told them bluntly, "is directly opposed to the policy of the century." "The poor are the true children of the Church," he also declared. "They are in her by prescriptive right—the rich only by grace and privilege." If the opinion of the world holds good, he maintained, "God's providence, which has created rich and poor, is indefensible." And by declaring that a multitude of sins, particularly those of women, are directly traceable to poverty, he lifted the duty of social reparation from a pious precept to an elementary duty. In days when the highest political quarters are making themselves the dispensers of that consolation which we are told on a still higher Authority, wealth will never lack in this world, Bossuet's view on the matter is a wholesome corrective.

THERE is a good deal of justice in the demand put forward by a delegation of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs for a reduction in taxation that shall put unmarried wage- and salary-earners on the same footing as the married, but we have not a very lively confidence that their representation will receive much beyond formal acknowledgment. A peculiarly persistent depreciation of the category that might be termed permanently unmarried exists in too many quarters for it not to find a reflection in the ranks of officialdom. It is an atavistic affair dating from the days when the world was better organized for marriage than it is today, and when the voice of the celibate citizen carried no weight whatever in national or civic councils. That it works hardly on thousands of deserving persons, male and female, is undoubted. The theory that selfishness lies at the back of a reluctance to venture on the pleasant way of matrimony does not stand the most simple and practical test, which is a thought given to the people one knows. Everyone has unmarried friends whose solitary status can be traced to anything rather than the desire to lead an easier life.

ANOTHER mild literary storm, with the harassed muse of history again as its centre, seems to be brewing in England. Professing to be shocked by certain "revelations" contained in the unexpurgated version of the Greville Memoirs, published in this country, the London press is taking Mr. P. W. Wilson sharply to task for his editorship. Particularly resented is the statement (though presented as idle and malicious gossip) that the prince consort was credited in hostile quarters with designs upon the British queen's life. It is amusing to see one organ congratulating itself upon its alleged discovery that the offending passage really had reference to the royal family at Naples. Slander, one would think, is slander, wherever and upon whom

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uttered. To us who view the incident in the perspective of distance as well as of time, it does not seem to make so vital a difference that the gossip had reference to a foreign and Catholic rather than a native and Protestant queen, even though her consort was that much berated and possibly even more maligned figure "the famous King Bomba."

ADMITTING that he is a pioneer in what he himself terms "an era of transatlantic commuting," Mr. Ralph Barton, says a few words on the comparative merits of life on either side the ocean. He believes that he is the spokesman for a good many Americans who think like him. New York especially arouses his ire. "New York is no longer a place to live in," he remarks. "The city is eating itself up and becoming uninhabitable." There is no blinking the fact that the clever artist's words will find a responsive echo in the breasts of many workers who do not possess his facilities for the transmission of their work thousands of miles by "the telephoto system," and who are forced to spend their waking and trying-to-sleep lives in close neighborhood to the sources of economic relief. The conception of contractor's work in our big cities as a twenty-four-hour affair, to be scheduled in day and night shifts, with the mere formality of a civic permit for any job labeled "urgent," is so complete that any protest against it on the ground of the harm and irritation it inflicts has the air of being that troublesome and unwelcome thing, a grievance. But, in days that seem a long way off, when the problems that life in large communities has brought in its train have been grappled with as their urgency calls for, the memory of a day when greed and haste were allowed to work their will at the expense of the nerves and health of an entire community may seem as unthinkable as they were unjustifiable.

WHAT has happened in the case of the Church of the Holy Cross, New York City, will come to many people who are disturbed by ominous signs of the times as something like an optimistic Dickens story. The parish is in a comparatively out-of-the-way place, and the faithful who come there are not noticeably burdened with the treasures which the moths consume. But it happens to be the vineyard presided over by Father Francis P. Duffy—the only citizen who could be sure of election to Governor Smith's office once that becomes vacant; and in him there grew the resolve to keep his beloved church in unimpaired existence. Therefore an "endowment drive" (a movement now calculated, as a general rule, to rob everybody of enthusiasm) was launched and a committee organized. The constitution of that committee is itself something like a fairy tale. Catholics, Protestants and Jews are arrayed there side by side, wearing expressions of beaming enthusiasm. So far the work has been a simple matter of keeping track of checks. Put this down as part of the chronicle of progress during 1927.

THE PERTURBED PEDESTRIAN

GENERAL MOTORS, we are informed, has enjoyed the most profitable nine months in its history. Mr. Ford's new model is reported as being decidedly "rakish" and (as another advertiser has it) "full of eager power." In spite of these interesting developments, the fact remains that a great many people walk. Sometimes it is a matter of choice; sometimes a necessity. And when the pedestrian consults the statistics of accidents caused to his kind by motorists, a feeling of deep uneasiness naturally comes over him. A large percentage of the casualties inflicted annually originate, it is true, in the failure of drivers to notice oncoming trains, other motorists or even telegraph poles. Nevertheless so many pedestrians are included in the fatal lists that anyone who trusts to his sturdy legs in navigating about the world must feel something like a lonely traveler in the days of grim and determined robber barons.

In Munich busy streets are lined with chains to prevent jay-walking. Several American cities have made earnest attempts to educate citizens into the habit of crossing streets in orthodox fashion, and to enforce the law which assures the pedestrian the right of way at unguarded corners. Leisurely England is waking up to the dimensions of the subject. We are told that the crowds at Charing Cross are developing the art of waiting for the policeman to invite them across. The Spectator has even considered seriously the problem of country roads, and reached the conclusion that footpaths should be constructed to run parallel with the paved highways. Admittedly this procedure would be costly and sometimes inimical to rural charm. But, says our editor, "if we have to choose between the aesthetic and the practical, between preserving the amenities of the countryside and saving human life, our choice cannot be doubtful. We cannot banish the motor car and motor lorry, and we must therefore ensure reasonable security to the pedestrian, whatever the cost."

In other words, automobile travel has created a universal problem that is now receiving universal attention. It is truly remarkable to notice how little serious concern the public has as yet expended upon driving safely. Publicity has created in almost everyone a deep respect for the railroads, and has forced these into adopting expensive safety devices. Perhaps the fact that highways are common property leads us to take them somewhat patronizingly. One must also remember that many of our road problems are quite ancient. There is the fellow who "takes it all," for instance. In his interesting book, Old Trails and Roads in Penn's Land, Dr. John T. Faris quotes the following anecdote from a diary written during 1787:

"As I was riding along I met a Dutchman on a very poor horse, riding past. I gave him what of the road I could, yet he rode so nigh that his horse's hipbone struck me under the cap of the knee and lamed me so

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hard that I found it difficult in working up the mountain. . . . I wish the Dutchman had ridden a better horse."

This parallel from older days is, in a measure, comforting, and so are the records of improvement which every year increases. Reading the diary of a pioneer Sister of Mercy, we were impressed with the story of hardships encountered in traveling from Chicago to Pittsburgh scarcely more than a hundred years ago. The good Sister arrived so exhausted that she was forced to spend a month recovering from a "nervous disorder." Sometimes contemporary nerves are badly afflicted by what goes on in busy places; but at least one feels tolerably sure that going from Stroudsburg to Mauch Chunk is not now an adventure for utterly undaunted hearts alone.

THE SENTINELS

DURING that strange interlude on Holy Saturday, when the Church allows itself, as it were, a little anticipatory amusement over the approaching discomfiture of the enemies of Our Saviour at the Sepulchre, a lesson from one of the Fathers that is sung or read at Office contains a significant phrase which has become one of our most oft-quoted proverbs: "Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?" "If the sentinels are not to be trusted, who is to mount guard over them?"

The organized police forces of this country are the civil sentinels of the nation. They are charged with the maintenance of order and the protection of life and property, and hold a watching brief over at least the outward manifestations of morality. During the century or so that has elapsed since their organization, their duties and responsibilities have grown to an extent some thoughtful observers regard with mixed feelings. The common man in our great cities, Chesterton has told us, "lives all his life in the valley of the shadow of the policeman." And with an extension of their sphere of action has corresponded an increase of power. They have become the point of contact on a thousand occasions that rise daily in our complex lives, between the citizen, his liberties and his duties. It is not too much to say that they interpret these duties and liberties to him. Anything, therefore, that tends to unsettle our faith in their corporate character interests the mass of our citizenry vitally, and to ignore it is to be a bad steward of the freedom for which incessant watchfulness is the best safeguard.

It is not our intention here to make any list of the disquieting incidents that have recently called the attention of the public to what looks very like a lapse in conduct on the part of very many of our uniformed guardians. Nor must any remarks we think fit to make be taken as reflection upon the character of the force as a whole. The strain upon the temper and reasonableness of the police involved in being, a score of times in a day, called to enforce order and decency among a heterogeneous and often polyglot population, the knowledge that, in the last issue, they carry their lives in their hands and that an entire category of the lawless are arrayed against them, must be immense. The charity of individual members in obscure and urgent cases is no secret to those who know our big cities. Nevertheless, when all is said, the public has its rights, and one of them is an assurance that the men in whom they have vested the "ultima ratio" of the law, are themselves subject to a discipline that will fearlessly strip power from those who have shown themselves unfit to be delegated with it.

It is just this conviction that recent events have shaken. An article by Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, in the October issue of Harper's Magazine, entitled, "Official Lawlessness," and giving names and dates, charges a variety of misdemeanors, including torture to exact confessions, denial of legal assistance, brutality in making arrests, and what is perhaps, most disdisquieting of all, a refusal upon the part of higher officials to entertain any complaint, even though made by men of the highest respectability—a refusal sometimes couched in insulting language.

In a very extended editorial comment on Mr. Villard's article, the Catholic World asks, very pertinently, "What is the reaction in the minds of Catholics who read of all these atrocities?" It might go on and ask what is the reaction upon their minds of other incidents, hardly to be classed as "atrocities," but which testify to a growing disregard for the liberty, not to say, the dignity, of the citizen. A publication of cases "nolle prossed," owing to the intervention of reasonable and influential parties at the last moment, we believe, might yield some surprising results. It might show that more than one citizen involved in a trifling infraction of street policing, has been beaten, threatened and flung into a cell; or that the loose phrase, "resisting arrest" has been stretched to permit of practically any indignity an ill-tempered and brutal officer might choose to inflict upon the "corpus vile" of his prisoner, in return for an answer lacking in the abject servility which seems to be demanded from all who find themselves in contact with the strong arm of the law.

No one less than the Catholic wishes to see that strong arm weakened or unnerved. And no one, it may be added, is more interested than the Catholic in seeing that the most rigid qualifications for being guardians of the public, as regards both temper and character, are insisted upon. The sight of scores of brave and devoted men upon some public occasion approaching the holy altar as a body, in the strength and pride of youth, is one that is hard to watch unmoved. For their sake, if for their sake alone, charges which reflect upon the character of the force to which they belong and which have moved our leading Catholic monthly to more than four pages of indignant comment, should be fearlessly examined and, if proven, as fearlessly corrected. "Quis custodiet custodes?"

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MUNIFICENT UNCLE SAMUEL

By GEORGE E. ANDERSON

IT IS apparently an occasion for extreme regret on the part of a considerable portion of the American people that the United States is not placing a cutthroat mortgage upon the rest of the world as rapidly as has been anticipated. Indeed it seems difficult to satisfy the whole of our population at the same time with respect to Uncle Sam's international financial position. In the opening months of 1927 there were those among our own people, not to mention the people of a somewhat frantic Europe, who were worried sick over the prospect of what was likely to happen to the United States because of its excessive investments in other countries. When the government survey of international payments broke the summer dulness in August with the announcement that our net growth as a creditor nation in 1926 was only $557,000,000 instead of the $1,332,000,000 we were led to accept earlier in the year as the measure of our increase, there were many who seemed to feel that, as a financial concern, the United States was almost a total loss.

Of course there is considerable difference between $557,000,000 and $1,332,000,000, but, after all, even the former is a rather formidable sum. Perhaps the mortgage business is only postponed. In the meantime financial authorities on two or more continents have been mulling over the statistics presented by that department of the government presided over by the ever-efficient Secretary of Commerce, and have come to the conclusion that, after all, the statement may not mean exactly what they have assumed it was intended to mean.

Not the least significant comment upon the situation has come from foreign financial authorities who have been disposed to question the authenticity of some of the foreign credit items which entered into the government's review. American comment seems to have been largely the reaction of a state of mind best indicated as one of pained surprise—reflecting almost as much of a shock as if the country's principal debtor had loosed his bonds and decamped for parts unknown. It seems to have been occasion for considerable mental anguish to learn that, in transactions totaling about eight and one-half billion dollars, there are some very important credit items in our financial dealings with the rest of the world. Why this should be the case is uncertain. Certainly there is nothing in the science of economics to indicate that a nation can eat its cake and keep it as well, nor can we marvel at the great sums Americans spend and send abroad without realizing that these great sums must be accounted for in striking an international balance of payments.

The fact is that the international balance of payments between the United States and other nations, both last year and in previous recent years, has been distinctly favorable and far better than was anticipated by those best situated to judge of the position of the country in international finance. The chief occasion for surprise has been in the size and nature of some of the foreign, particularly European, credits. We find, for example, that other nations made new investments in the United States last year to the amount of more than half the much-vaunted new direct investments of the people of this country in other countries; while foreigners bought back previous American foreign investments to the amount of something like a third of our new investments, and have deposited money in American banks to cover practically the balance of our new investments. On a strictly business basis, the basis of investments on which monetary returns are expected, the statement of debits and credits on first view appears to be pretty much of a washout.

One can get at the heart of the matter, however, by an examination of several items in the statement of the balance of the nation's international payments. American tourists in 1926 expended in other countries $646,000,000 more than foreign tourists spent in the United States. Immigrants in the United States sent to other countries $287,000,000 net. The charitable and religious contributions of the American people to other countries amounted to $46,000,000 net. In other words nearly a billion of the billion and a third dollars invested by the United States abroad last year was spent or given—spent on education, pleasure or what we may hope is personal benefit, or given outright as a gift with no material return in sight. This was in what may fairly be termed a normal year, in peace times, with no adventitious circumstances. The favorable totals, at least in some of the principal items, will probably be exceeded by the current year's transactions. There is nothing in all history to compare with this show of national financial power and national wealth, as well as of a people's generosity.

It is quite too easy to accept the government's statistics as indicating a permanent trend or an international balance, which in fact may not exist. International payments, even including funded credits, do not fully measure relative changes in international finance, while on the other hand European and other foreign investments or other remittances to the United States do not necessarily represent a new increase in European wealth in its relations to the United States. With European governments controlling, or at least attempting to control, international exchange and European purchases in the United States, and with European capital seeking refuge in the United States from

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storms in continental finance, an apparent European counterhold upon the United States may in fact be merely a postponement of settlement day. Undoubtedly a very large portion of European remittances to this country in the past year represents a temporary movement which will later become a European liability.

Aside from the immense American expenditures abroad, the items which have evoked the most surprise, as has been said, are those which measure increased foreign, and particularly European, investments in the United States. Yet there is no reason why they should have done so. For two hundred years or more Europe has been investing money in the United States—when it had the money to invest. Much of Europe's American investments were necessarily withdrawn during the world war. The marshaling of American assets by Great Britain and France during the struggle was all that made continued purchases of supplies in the United States possible at a critical period. It is only natural and reasonable that, when the European funds thus taken during the war are released, they should again seek American investment. The phenomenon is largely a mere rearrangement of old investments; whereas American investments in Europe represent largely a putting to use of new wealth.

Moreover, in the years since the war, the chaotic state of European finances has naturally led to a "flight of capital," much of which came to the United States for both safety and profit. The purchase of American securities by foreign investors has been merely a part of this movement. The repurchase of their own securities after such securities had been established upon an international gold basis by issue in the United States, is another part of the movement. The resale to foreigners of direct American investments abroad after the latter had received American stabilization, is a third factor in the movement. Then there are other factors which together may be taken as the usual give and take in international market operations, the staple if not stable items in ordinary trade and commerce.

There is a tremendous ebb and flow of such transactions incidental to the rise and fall of comparative prices in the international stock and money markets, the new issue of securities, the placing of national loans—in short, in the ordinary trade of the international bourse. It is impossible to gather up all such transactions into a bundle and say: "These belong to the year 1926 and are permanent." Many of them come over from 1925, and many of them go over into 1927, and many of them are temporary, while others involve credit arrangements not reducible to mere book transactions. Our increasing financial hold upon the rest of the world is not confined to the net balance of our investments abroad over foreign investments in the United States, or indeed to any favorable or unfavorable balance of payments in any one year. All such things are too greatly modified by too many other factors for one to indulge in close reasoning in regard to them.

No amount of statistical pyrotechnics can hide the hard fact that, whereas a few years ago investments in other countries were scarcely more than nominal, the American people in 1926 placed a total of one and one-third billion dollars in direct new investments in addition to other sundry investments, abroad; while it is doubtful if the debit items in our international account were on the whole much greater proportionally than they had been before. In the seven years from 1920 to 1926 inclusive, the American public made new foreign capital investments, war debts excluded, to the amount of $15,424,000,000, as against new capital investments of foreigners in the United States in the same period to the amount of $3,286,000,000, giving the United States a net balance of $12,138,000,000. The Department of Commerce estimates that at the end of 1926 the total private investments of the people of the United States in other countries was $11,215,000,000. Against this is an estimated holding of something like $3,000,000,000 in American securities owned by foreigners. In 1926 Americans received in interest on their investments abroad, exclusive of war debts, $678,000,000 or $528,000,000 more than was paid foreign investors in American securities. This interest return represents an increase of something like $150,000,000 over the returns in 1925, and there has been a steady increase in such returns since 1920, when the return was only about $50,000,000, or less than one-tenth of the present return.

It would require much statistical juggling to show that this net interest return is not earned, or that the constant increase does not reflect an immense net increase in American investments abroad. None of these figures can be taken as gospel truth. They represent perhaps the best work that has ever been done in attempting to reach an accurate statement of the international balance of payments of the United States, but at best they are merely estimates. After all is said and done, after apparently all possible credits are given other nations, the fact remains that the figures show a net increase of more than half a billion dollars in American investments abroad. The net increase in interest returns indicates that the net increace in investments has really been very much greater.

Let us look at things in a large way. Only a nation of tremendous financial power could spend practically a billion dollars a year abroad for pleasure, education, charity and what not, without property returns in some form. In spite of the stupendous American expenditures in other lands, gold still flows to the United States where it is not wanted. $138,000,000 net in gold and currency came to the country in 1926, and

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that, too, in the face of a never-ceasing demand for it in other countries. We still have a favorable merchandise balance of more than a third of a billion dollars. Bank statisticians in the United States report, after a careful survey, that American overseas investments are increasing at the rate of at least two and a half times those of Great Britain, and with the large number of foreign loans now being contracted for in the United States, and the opposition in Great Britain to the further export of capital under the circumstances now obtaining in the United Kingdom, that rate is likely to increase. The American field of foreign investment is constantly widening. American bankers during the current summer and early fall contracted for extensive loans to countries and corporations, not only among those which have formerly been regular customers but also with others in parts of the world which have had few, if any, dealings with the money market of the United States. The United States took the lead of all nations in foreign investments in 1920, and most of the time since has maintained that lead. If the rate of increase of these foreign placements is not as rapid as our amateur economists have led us to believe, it is at least rapid enough, extensive enough and regular enough to satisfy the most captious.

The United States now has all the factors which lead to increased investments abroad—accumulated wealth, cheap money and production in practically all lines in excess of national requirements. It is amassing wealth abroad for the reason that—for the time being, at least—a certain amount of its accumulated wealth is more productive abroad than it is in the United States. In short, we have the money to lend. Increased investments abroad, however, are merely incidental to increased wealth, independent of international investments or generous dealings with the rest of the world. What the United States produces in excess of what it consumes is the measure of the growth of our national wealth. In that, the rate of increase is great enough to give us furiously to think as to what use we are to make of it as a nation.

THE IRON HAND IN MEXICO

By FRANCIS McCULLAGH

(This is the first of two articles to appear in The Commonweal on the recent Conservative insurrection in Mexico, and its aftermath. They are from the pen of the British journalist Francis McCullagh, internationally known for his first-hand investigations, a few years ago, of the anti-Christian movement in Bolshevist Russia. Mr. McCullagh's paper, The American Press and Mexico, in The Commonweal of October 27, was widely commented on.—The Editors.)

DURING a visit which I paid to Mexico several months ago, I was able to collect a good deal of material about the Conservative insurrection in Jalisco and the adjoining states. This movement was one of the saddest stories I ever investigated, and it constitutes one of the most poignant pages in the history of Mexico.

For it was the triumph of brute force and corruption over idealism, youth and purity. Brute force had all the army, all the money in the Treasury, and all the Mexican newspapers—in the sense that those newspapers could not publish a word of criticism on what were euphemistically called "the military operations." The great American newspapers could have done so, of course, had they wished. But they did not wish; and this makes the tragedy more tragic.

The fact that the Conservatives were unready, inexperienced and credulous does not make their story the less sad. I met several of them in Jalisco and elsewhere; and they tried to convince me that the American Department of State had formally recognized their President, René Capistrán Garza, had revoked the embargo on arms, and had done many other things which I knew it had not done. If some agent of theirs in the United States gave them this wrong information, he was guilty of a cruel deception; but even that would only increase my admiration for the score of young men who gave their lives as a protest against the abominable tyranny which now exists in Mexico, and for the thousands of men and women who were arrested, imprisoned and in some cases sent to the terrible penal colony of the Islas Marias.

All the Catholic insurrectos who were taken with arms in their hands were, of course, killed at once without trial. As the government had the right to deprive them of life, I shall say nothing about them; though I take off my hat to them all the same, for they were brave men. One case, however, I shall give for it is typical of many others.

After a fight which took place on one occasion at Parras, Coahuila, seven men and one boy of fifteen were captured by the federal troops; and, taking pity on the boy on account of his youth, the captain in charge of the federals sent him on a bogus errand to another village. He expected him to escape, and was astonished when the lad returned to say that he could not find the man he had been sent in search of.

"You young fool!" said the officer, "I only wanted to give you a chance to escape."

"I don't want to escape," said the lad, "I want to die with my comrades."

And he died with them.

Some of the Mexican Catholics who came to the United States on the outbreak of the religious war may have been rather unheroic characters; but that will never prevent me from feeling admiration for

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those youths who died, like this lad, on the mountains of Coahuila and Jalisco. Some of them were the sons of wealthy parents, and could have led a life of ease in Mexico or here. Nearly all of them were extraordinarily young. I still preserve with religious care mementoes of them, letters worthy of martyrs, and in one case a mourning-card, fringed with black, which bears the following inscription in Spanish:

> On Thursday, the nineteenth, of the present month,
> Gave his life heroically for our Holy Religion
> The youth
> Salvador Gutierrez Mora
> At the age of twenty-two years.
> His mother and his brothers, with Christian resignation,
> Communicate to you this news.
> Tacubaya, May, 1927.
> "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."
> Matthew 10, 39.

These boys died fighting against the worst tyranny that Latin America has known since the days Lopez ruled in Paraguay. There was a time when the American press would have done them honor, but that time is past; and if the great newspapers of New York mention their names it is to brand them as "reactionaries."

And what about the fifty humanitarian, liberty-loving associations which cover the United States, and spend $3,000,000 a year hunting down people who are cruel to cats, Pekinese dogs, children and communists? Have they a word to say in favor of these Mexican lads? Not a single word. Until recently they deafened us with their appeals for Sacco and Vanzetti. Have they ever once appealed for the victims of communist governments? Never once.

I have spoken of the brave men who died with arms in their hands. In a different category, however, are those who were murdered because the government suspected them of being connected with the Society for the Defense of Religious Liberty or with some other Catholic organization. Many such men were murdered, after a long series of illegalities which were carefully enumerated to me by some of the ablest jurists in Mexico, and in some cases by the lawyers who had charge of their case: for obvious reasons I cannot be more definite than this.

In all the cases that I heard of, the victims were arrested without a warrant—violation of the Constitution! Though civilians, they were tried by a military court—violation of the Constitution! They were tortured—violation of the Constitution! Sometimes their parents were wealthy and therefore able to obtain for them the best legal assistance in the republic. The lawyers thus engaged got out amparos—injunctions which, according to the Constitution, have the power to paralyze the prosecution and absolutely safeguard the accused till a civil judge reviews the case. The military authorities always treated these amparos with undisguised contempt.

Now, what is the Constitution which is thus violated? Is it a document drawn up by some Catholic predecessor of Calles? On the contrary, it is the Queratarо Constitution, drawn up in 1917, with no authority from the people, by the great anti-clerical Carranza, and composed in verbose and high-sounding language. Calles and Obregon profess intense veneration for it, and even regard it as "intangible, irreformable, santa y única." If Calles is asked to modify the laws relating to oil, or agriculture, or religion, he points to the copy of the Constitution hanging on the wall, and declares that the thing cannot be done—never, never; that not a jot or tittle of that sacred document can be changed. Yet this is the Constitution with which he plays ducks and drakes when it is a question of dealing with Catholics, and, indeed, with his enemies generally—for in the coup d'état which he carried out so adroitly at the beginning of last month, he violated the Constitution thousands of times.

In Guadalajara I made particular inquiries into the case of Gonzales Flores, a member of the Society for the Defense of Religious Liberty. Flores was a civilian, yet he was arrested by soldiers who entered his house at 4 o'clock in the morning of April 1 without a search warrant or a judicial document of any kind. He was brought before a military court in a barracks. His family obtained an amparo from a federal justice, but this amparo was ignored by General Ferreira, one of Calles's trustiest henchmen, then in command of the Guadalajara garrison. The trial was held in secret and Flores was tortured for six hours, but he persisted in maintaining his innocence. He was shot in the military barracks where he had been imprisoned. On the same day, four students were put to death with the same illegalities; on April 4, two more were butchered; and, a few days later, six others. No death certificates were furnished to the families, though the law is very exacting on this point. The bodies were not delivered to the parents, doubtless because of the damning evidence of prolonged torture which they bore. In Guadalajara alone over a dozen prisoners were killed without trial. One of them wrote two most affecting letters the night before his murder, one to his mother and the other to his fiancée; these letters were smuggled out of the barracks by a soldier.

But worse than death was the fate meted out to the prisoners who were sent to the notorious Islas Marias. To send political prisoners to these islands, especially without trial, is against the law; but it has been done in thirty or forty instances; and Mr. Sheffield reported once to the Department of State that among those sent were two nuns.

The brutal illegality of these proceedings caused an application to the Supreme Court of Justice to be made on June 16, 1927, by the Civic Association for the Defense of Liberty, an organization comprising some of the ablest lawyers and most distin-

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guished citizens of Mexico. This application, of which I possess a copy, points out, among other pertinent facts, the following:

(1) According to articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution, the Inspector-General of Police lacks the constitutional competency to try anyone or to punish anyone with deportation to a penal colony. (I might here explain that all these deportations were carried out by General Roberto Cruz, the Inspector-General of Police in Mexico City.)

(2) Article 13 prohibits the existence of any special tribunal like that formed by the Inspector-General.

(3) Article 19 says that the prisoners must be placed on trial within three days after their arrest.

In the same way articles 20, 21, and 29 of the Constitution are also cited to prove that in detaining prisoners, sentencing them and deporting them, General Roberto Cruz is violating the law.

"Our only object," say the signatories, in conclusion, "is to obtain for these prisoners the benefit of the guarantees which our Constitution extends to all prisoners, and even to the most atrocious criminals."

As a result of this memorial, Calles ordered the release of the political prisoners confined in the subterranean dungeons of the Inspectorate-General or exiled to the Islas Marias. But, even if all of those prisoners have been released, the guilt of President Calles remains. I shall therefore say something of those terrible islands.

The climate can only be described as infernal, being hot, moist, and so debilitating that the most hardened criminals cannot stand it more than two or three years. The heat is so great that the prisoners when at work wear only loin-cloths. They work generally in a salt-pit; they number as a rule 2,000 in all; and they are guarded by 100 soldiers.

Much sympathy was excited in America some twenty years ago by descriptions of Siberian prisons, but everything connected with the Islas Marias and the conveyance of the political prisoners thither is even more calculated to excite pity. First came the parade through the streets of the federal capital. The prisoners were always handcuffed to the most loathsome criminals. Some of the former were doctors, journalists, lawyers, professors, university graduates; and the punishment of being marched thus through the streets in this way and in such company was terrible. Even for me, who knew none of them personally, the sight was almost unendurable: I had to turn away my face. What, then, must the torture have been for the prisoners themselves, for their wives, for their children?

But this was not all. They were conveyed from Mexico City to Manzanilla in cattle trucks, over the top of which planks had been nailed, and this journey took several days. In one truck there were eighty people, the political prisoners and the ordinary prisoners being, as usual, mixed together. I made most of the same journey at the same time in a comfortable train; but, though I passed the heat of the day in the comfortable special car of the chief engineer, an American, I almost died of the heat and the dust. Yet over this route those political prisoners were brought in cattle trucks. I do not know how many millions of dollars the Southern Pacific Railway has spent in bridging the gap between the Pacific and the federal capital; but I do know that this is not the sort of freight it expected the "enlightened" government of President Calles to bring over the new line.

In order that their wives and children should also taste of this bitter chalice, the President's newspaper, El Sol, took advantage of the opportunity to publish ten long serial articles on the conveyance of the prisoners to those fatal isles, on the terrible hardships they would have to endure there, and on the small prospect any of them had of coming back alive. One would have thought that Calles would have ordered his journalistic mouthpiece to use the soft pedal; but he did not do so, and his newspaper left out none of the horrors. It even reproduced photographs of half-naked prisoners working in quarries and in salt mines and on the torrid beach.

But there is an even more horrible story, grim with treachery and murder. This I shall tell next week.

Tramp Ship

She's creeping slowly up past Quarantine,
A shameless, shaggy rover of the sea;
A commercial vagrant, dirty and serene,
A salty chevalier of beggary.

She'll bluster till her anchor clatters out—
She'll fidget, yank and grumble with the tide;
Yet she grins a little 'neath her battered snout,
Proud because there's cargo in her hide.

The stuff her better sisters wouldn't take,
Unsavory bits that lost the regular run;
She fetched 'em 'cross the world for she must make
A little profit when the year is done.

No silken gowns sweep o'er her painted boards,
She comes or goes and no one seems to care;
A little fuel and grub are her rewards,
She'll leave at anytime for anywhere.

She wins no admiration from the piers,
Contempt is written in each loafer's look;
But she knows the worth of lubber cheers,
And she knows a better road off Sandy Hook.

Her sides have felt the sun off Dondra Head,
She's slopped her share of sea in Skagerrac,
She's been on a spree or two in sunny Said,
But once again she's bringing cargo back.

Just a hungry hobo, hobbling up the bay,
Looking for a handout and a crew;
Then down the world upon some waterway,
Kicking along a road that's always new.

ROBERT NORMILE ROSE.

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A COLLEGE FOR MARTYRS

By HARVEY WICKHAM

THE recent decision of the Fascist government of Rome to spare the English College, on Via Monserrato, which plans as originally drawn for the improvement of the city threatened to destroy, not only illustrates the new cordiality existing between Church and state in Italy, but is of special interest to Americans inasmuch as it calls attention to one of the most venerable religious foundations in the world—one which played a leading part in a glorious but often neglected chapter in the history of our forefathers.

Those who make the doubtful boast that America is Nordic and predominantly English in its origins, continually assume that the words English and Nordic are synonymous with Protestant. It is well, therefore, occasionally to recall by what means Catholic England was "converted," and how far the persuasion even of the rack and the gibbet fell short of depriving the land of the Pilgrim Fathers of its saving remnant of the faithful.

Notable records of those trying days are to be found in the archives of the English College in Rome, During the reign of Elizabeth it was a veritable college for martyrs, its roll of honor containing the names of six alumni who were declared Beati; of thirty-six who were pronounced Venerable Servants of God by the Decree of the Congregation of Rites of December 29, 1880, besides seven others whose cause was not considered sufficiently certain for their names to be included in the official recognition of martyrdom; and more than a hundred confessors of the Faith—men who suffered imprisonment and torture, though they were not actually executed for their religious convictions.

The present College, tucked inconspicuously among the buildings of a humble and quiet street near the Palazzo Farnese, was canonically founded by a bull of His Holiness Gregory XIII on April 23, 1579, but is the lineal descendant of a yet more venerable institution, called the English Hospice, erected upon the same site as a protest against the extortions practised upon pilgrims by Roman inn-keepers at the time of the Jubilee of 1350. And the Hospice itself was the heir of an English School (Schola Anglorum) whose origins, like those of Oxford, are enveloped in the mists of antiquity. It was certainly in existence early in the eighth century, in the days of Gregory II, King Ina and Charlemagne.

This Schola Anglorum was a true college in the mediaeval sense of the word—a loosely organized collection of masters and pupils, the centre of the intellectual and social life of its quarter. Its buildings, including its Church of Santa Maria (known today as the Church of San Spirito in Sassia) were not in Via Monserrato but in the classical horti Agrippinae, to the south-east of the circus of Nero below the Vatican hill, where runs the modern Borgo San Spirito.

Present-day visitors to Rome often wonder why nearly every street leading to Saint Peter's is called borgo instead of via. The word is merely the Italian for borough, and its use is derived from the fact that here was the ancient English settlement, or town.

It cannot be said who was the first Englishman to make the perilous "Roman journey," and to pray at the shrines of the Apostles; but the records show that Saint Wilfrid of Hexham visited the Pontiff about the year 654, and that from that time on his example was followed by an ever-increasing number. They were, according to Venerable Bede, "noble and simple, men and women, soldiers and private persons, moved by the instinct of divine love."

"Many, too, went for purposes of study, to learn music, or to gain an insight into other branches of art," adds Monsignor Gasquet, the present cardinal-protector of the College, "for we must never lose sight of the fact that the arts were cultivated at Rome throughout the whole of the middle-ages." The humanitas of the eternal city was always operative, but to come within its influence was sometimes difficult. Many pilgrims perished from encounters with Saracens in the Alps. There were antipopes set up by the emperors, showing no mercy to those intent upon visiting the true Pope. There were ice and snow if one went by the great pass of Saint Bernard, and storms and pirates if one went by sea.

Nevertheless the English colony grew—sometimes in the most unlikely manner. Thus in the days of Pope Leo IX, Thorfinn, Earl of the Orkneys, a ferocious sea-king who had earned the title of "raven feeder," sought and found this humanitas with such effect that afterward he "sat down quietly and kept peace over all his realm." Oswin, King of Northumbria, contemplated the Roman journey, and Caedwalla, King of the West Saxons, actually made it. Charlemagne visited at the Schola in 800, and King Ethelwulf in 854; while the latter's son, Alfred the Great, having been annointed in Rome the previous year, secured for the foundation partial exemption from papal taxes—an exemption made complete on petition of King Canute. Even King Macbeth is recorded among its famous visitors.

The Schola and its quarter were devastated by three great fires (one of them immortalized by Raphael in his Incendio del Borgo, in the Vatican) and suffered from the Saracen raid of 841. But all damages continued to be repaired until the interdict of 1154 to 1159 laid Rome under a ban. Deprived at once of its pilgrims and its revenues, the Schola, with the exception of its church, fell into ruins.

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How long the English colony was left without a centre cannot be said. In 1360 there was already a flourishing gild of English laymen in the city. But the site of the old Schola was now occupied by a hospital for the sick. So, in 1362, a piece of property on Via Monserrato was acquired from John Shepherd, a rosary seller, and from Alice, his wife, and the erection of the English Hospice began. Though it could not be called a seminary, it had on its rolls a number of "students" and "scholars," clerks in holy orders with licenses to go to Rome to complete their studies. As the recognized successor of the Schola Anglorum, many concessions—such extra-parochial rights as a cemetery for the English—were granted it by the Pontiffs. Henry VII made it a national English institution by assuming responsibility for the appointment of its custos, or guardian, and Pope Alexander VI took it under his special protection.

The number of English pilgrims to Rome was always surprising, and during the days of the Hospice it sometimes rose as high as 212 in a single year. They were of all sorts and conditions of men. In May, 1505, the records note the entertainment of "ten sailors from the vessel Anne Clark." They were followed by Dr. Henry Standish, who was later used by Henry VIII in the suppression of the monasteries. Christopher Bainbridge, Archbishop of York and later cardinal, was the custos in 1510. He died in 1514 as the result of poison administered by his Italian steward, and his monumental effigy—among the most beautiful works of art of its sort in Rome—is still to be seen in the church of the English College.

In 1514 the custos was Dr. John Bell, who was sent to Rome by the King of England to expound the royal point of view on the divorce question. John Clark, Bishop of Bath and Wells, custos in 1523, had come to Rome the year before to present to Pope Leo X the celebrated document signed by Henry VIII known as The Seven Sacraments against Luther, in which the royal schismatic-to-be declares that than England "there is no nation which more opposes, more condemns, more loathes this monster (Lutheranism) and the heresies which spring from it." Thus Henry VIII obtained the title "Defender of the Faith"—still mockingly preserved by wearers of the English crown.

The sack of Rome by the imperial army (largely Lutheran) under the Constable Bourbon, in 1527, when for eight dreadful days soldiers "rejoiced to burn and to defile what all the world adored," cost the Hospice its altar plate, together with much other property and valuable papers. Then came the defection of the English King from the Church and the appointment of Cardinal Pole as custos—Cardinal Pole, who, on December 5, 1550, came within two votes of being the choice of the conclave which eventually elected Cardinal del Monte to the Papacy as Julius III.

It was the death of Queen Mary in 1558 and the need of training heroic young priests to minister to English Catholics suffering under Elizabeth which led to the final transformation of the Hospice into the present College. Dr. Owen Lewis, subsequently Archdeacon of Cambray, and Dr. William Allen, founder of the seminaries of Douay and Rheims and subsequently cardinal, were the leaders of the movement. The first students were lodged in some buildings near Saint Peter's, but on Christmas Day, 1578, they moved to the Via Monserrato institution, there to await the papal bull which was to give them official recognition.

It is my purpose here to tell but one chapter of the troubled history of the English College, long since styled "the Venerable." For the rest, a few words must suffice. Dr. Maurice Clenock, a Welshman, former custos of the Hospice, was the first rector. The English students objected to him on account of his nationality. There were "stirs." So the Pope put Father Agazzari in charge. The "stirs" continued, objection being made to Father Agazzari because he was a Jesuit. The students demanded an English secular priest for rector. Nevertheless they continued to be a burden upon Jesuit patience until the temporary suppression of the Society by Pope Clement XIV. On the night of August 16, 1773, the date of the brief of suppression, the General of the Society, Father Laurenzo Ricci, was taken by Corsican soldiers to the English College and imprisoned in an upper gallery until, on September 22, he was taken to the Castle Sant' Angelo, there to end his days.

The College was at once entrusted to Italian ecclesiastics, and English secular priests were not put in charge until after the French occupation, beginning in 1796, had made their alma mater desolate and empty for twenty years.

Now for the remarkable thing. During all these long years of insubordination and "stirs," the students (to quote from a series of documents known as the Annual Letters) were "so eager to shed their life-blood for Christ" that this formed "the constant topic of their conversation, and of the trial sermons delivered in the refectory at meals." Upon entry they were required to declare on oath their willingness to return as priests to England—though, upon the accession of Elizabeth, to become a priest had been made treason and to harbor one a felony under the law. When the student Ralph Sherwin was asked if he were willing thus to promise to face certain persecution and possible death, he answered (I have myself seen the contemporary manuscript which records his reply) "Aye, and today rather than tomorrow."

Nor was it an idle boast. Blessed Ralph Sherwin stands first on the list of the College's martyrs. Upon his return as a priest to England he was "cast into a filthy hole and deprived of the necessities of life," says the author of the Douay Diaries. "In the darkness and squalor of this dungeon, the young man was visited with the sweetness of heavenly consolation, even so as to have a vision of the death agony of Christ." He was placed then on a hurdle and dragged through the streets of London to Tyburn (now the site of the

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Marble Arch) where he was hanged, December 1, 1581. According to the Annual Letters, he publicly forgave everyone, kissed the hangman's hands, and "finally, his neck being in the noose, continued till his last breath to exclaim in tones of unspeakable joy, 'Jesu, Jesu, be to me Jesus!' "

Luke Kirby, of Durham (some say Colchester) Sherwin's companion in arrest, was tortured in prison by what was known as "the scavenger's daughter," and executed at Tyburn, May 20, 1582.

John Shert, companion of the two foregoing, a student in the days of the Hospice and the first student of the College to join the English mission, suffered the rack, was hanged, then decapitated, disembowled and quartered. Not all were so fortunate.

For example we read of Joseph Lampton, of Malton in Yorkshire, whose course in the English College was shortened at his request that he might hurry to administer to the distressed in England. To quote from Cardinal Gasquet's A History of the Venerable English College at Rome, he "suffered a savage and most horrible butchery at Newcastle-on-Tyne, July 27, 1593, being cut down whilst still alive, and a felon from the prison, as a ransom for his own life, was appointed to carry out the barbarous task of disemboweling."

This, indeed, seems to have been quite the usual thing in the "spacious days of Elizabeth," when "the two religions of Anglicanism," of which readers of The Commonweal have heard so much, had not yet emerged from the single one of anti-Popery. But why continue the horrible narrative, which occupies many pages of a parchment volume filled with the exquisite penmanship of pre-typewriter days still preserved in the archives of the English College? Its glory is sufficiently evident without multiplying details.

Is it any wonder, then, that "sweet Saint Philip," who lived close to the College, was wont to salute the students when meeting them on the streets with the words of the hymn for the feast of the Holy Innocents, "Salvete, flores martyrum"? Pope Gregory XIII was so moved by their heroism during the years from 1580 to 1585 that he made many viva voce concessions, ordering that relics of these martyrs might, in default of others, be used for the consecration of altars; that a Te Deum might be publicly sung on the receipt of news of one of their deaths; and that their pictures might be placed in the College church.

But these and other yet more precious relics were destroyed by the French, who used the College buildings as general headquarters for the troops of Murat —following, no doubt, the same impulse which led them to stable horses in the papal palace at Avignon.

During the Napoleonic era a court of law for a time took the place of the troops. But wanton destruction continued, and when, after the battle of Waterloo, Pope Pius VII came to restore the institution, he found only a roofless mass of ruins. These were quickly made habitable (all but the church, which was not opened until 1888) and Dr. Robert Gradwell, an English secular priest, became rector March 1, 1818. The long battle of the students had been won.

Now ensued what are known as the "golden days" of the College; for Dr. Gradwell was followed by Dr. Nicholas Wiseman, the famous orientalist, who was destined to receive the first pallium of the restored hierarchy in England. His outstanding character, spiritual and intellectual, quickly rendered the institution famous. Before Dr. Wiseman, such men as Evelyn (author of Evelyn's Diary) John Milton, and Dr. William Harvey (discoverer of the circulation of the blood) had been entertained. During his rectorship the influx of notable visitors continued, the pilgrims' book recording among many others the names of Lord Macaulay, Mr. Gladstone, and Manning—then but the rector of Lavington.

Manning, become Cardinal, had this to say of the incident:

> On Saint Thomas of Canterbury's Day in 1838, Gladstone and I called on Monsignor Wiseman, Rector of the English College. The cappella cardinalizia was going to begin. He sent for a student to take me into the chapel. It was Thomas Grant, afterward Bishop of Southwark. We stood together under the window on the court side of the chapel behind the cardinals. On Saint Agnes's Day, 1839, Monsignor Wiseman and I walked out to see the lambs blessed at Sta. Agnese fuori le Mura. He was not even bishop. How little we thought that he and I should have the first two palliums in a new hierarchy in England.

Lord Macaulay appears to have preserved a different impression of his visit, for in his journal he wrote of it:

> We went to the English College and walked about the cloisters: interesting cloisters to an Englishman. There lie several of our native dignitaries, who died in Rome before the Reformation. There lie, too, the bones of many Jacobites, honest martyrs to a worthless cause.

Only this morning of the day I write I stood in the old garden so lately saved from the fate of being "improved" into a public market. The present rector, the Right Reverend Bishop Hinsley, had just finished showing me such treasures of the past—chiefly records and bits of broken marble—as had escaped the French. Before us were an antique fountain and a very modern swimming-pool. Beyond the garden wall, I knew, ran the old street of the rosary sellers where once lived John Shepherd and Alice, his wife. And it was the spirit—not of Macaulay, but of those honest martyrs whom he so inaccurately called Jacobites, which seemed yet to brood about the place. And I thought:

These men, too, were Englishmen. It was the precious ichor of their faith which, in broken and imperfect vessels and spilling much by the way, the Pilgrim Fathers brought to Plymouth. Let those who boast of their Nordic ancestry turn, therefore, an occasional page of history—lest they forget!

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TELLING CHRISTIANS WHAT TO THINK

By EDWARD HAWKS

IT MAY seem to be a strange thesis to hold that it is those outside the Church who have the most right to say what those inside the Church are to believe. Nevertheless this thesis is held so commonly that it has become axiomatic with many. It is the thesis of Calles. It was the thesis of John Knox. It seems to be the thesis of Mr. Ernest Hamlin Abbott, the distinguished editor of the Outlook.

Of course it is dogmatic and intolerant, but one does not find fault with it for that. Strong convictions, one might almost say congenital convictions, are always dogmatic and often intolerant. The main objection to this thesis is that it is so extraordinarily illogical. A man might die for his conviction that it is his duty to mind other people's business rather than his own, but he could not argue that this was the most reasonable thing to do. A church is surely only a church because it has a message which is meant to save the world. The message is its own, and I may disown it; but I have no right to change it into something else. Mr. Abbott thinks that "the Church" is something that those who do not belong to it ought to control. He feels that "the Church" is an institution badly in need of salvation. He means, of course, that all organized Christianity should align itself with what the world thinks; or rather, with what his world thinks.

The occasion for this outburst of faith has to do with Bishop Barnes of Birmingham. There appears in a recent issue of the Outlook a defense of the Bishop. It is signed with the editor's own name; something that always marks an important promulgation. Mr. Abbott finds that the Bishop is right. He is right because "he [the Bishop] has said what people outside the Church everywhere admit." And the thing that these people everywhere admit is the alleged fact "that the history of man is one of struggle up out of animal nature." It will be noticed how the opinions of certain scientists, that they have been careful to say were not proved, have now, in the judgment of Mr. Abbott, become solemn religious facts that all preachers of truth must accept without hesitation. We suppose that if Bishop Barnes had lived a few hundreds of years ago he would have been adjudged to be right if he had maintained that the earth was stationary. He would have been right in spite of Galileo, because he would have had what Mr. Abbott calls "the most highly trained minds" to support him.

The Church, that is organized Christianity, has always been an object of paternal interest to the Outlook and, in his efforts to save it, Mr. Abbott is following venerable traditions. We dare, however, to suggest that in this case he is amazingly mistaken. He holds the forlorn theory that no one goes to church now because the Church preaches dogmas—not merely the "worn-out dogmas" of which we have heard so much, but any dogmas at all. This might be the opinion of a man who spends his Sunday on the golf links and really does not know who goes to church. It would not be the opinion of any man who took the trouble to station himself in front of a Catholic church at the time of Mass on a Sunday. And it certainly is not the opinion of Bishop Barnes, which is very much to the point.

Mr. Abbott reveals a very slight acquaintance with the Bishop whom he defends. Bishop Barnes is not trying to fill empty Anglican churches by preaching popular science. His is a much more serious intention. He is really trying to empty those churches that are filled with enthusiastic and uproarious ritualists. As the Archbishop of Canterbury tactfully pointed out, people are not much interested in the very ancient theory of evolution, but they are interested in the very ancient dogma of transubstantiation. Bishop Barnes does not think that English Christianity is dying out because it is unscientific; he is really terrified with the thought that what he calls Romanism is flourishing everywhere. Bishop Barnes, in a word, is really an old-fashioned Protestant with an obsession on the subject of Rome. He is trying to save England from a Roman invasion—or what his friend, Dean Inge, would call an invasion of debased Latin ideals that threaten the culture of the Anglo-Saxon. The aged clergyman who made the public protest in Saint Paul's Cathedral was defending the popular side. He was not trying to save a dying fundamentalism but speaking for an outraged and powerful majority who think it is high time for those holding important positions in the Church to cease from betraying it. In defending Bishop Barnes, Mr. Abbott is taking the journalistic side, and the Sunday-golf-playing side, which represent the non-church-goer. We think that he is also taking the side of the old-fashioned Protestant, too, for a long acquaintance with the pages of the Outlook reminds us that its editor is never tired of warning his readers against papal aggression.

The "gorilla sermon," as His Grace of Canterbury calls it, is quite out of date. It has succeeded in emptying the churches in which the ancestors of Mr. Abbott worshipped. The vast droves of unchurched Protestants will not be brought back to church by more gorilla sermons. There is a strong probability that they will be much rather attracted by the dogmas of Rome. And we suggest that this fear is not absent from the mind of Mr. Abbott. People love lots of dogma. Surely this is proved by the crowded churches where dogma is taught. This is unfortunate for the editor of the Outlook. But what is he going to do?

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He cannot change the people. He cannot create another race of people to take their place. There is only one thing to do and he does it unblushingly. He aligns himself with a small circle of sympathizers who consider themselves rather above the common herd. They are the trained thinkers who really ought to guide the destinies of mankind. He must not, however, include Bishop Barnes in this group.

If Bishop Barnes were an intellectual he would never have written his letter of protest to his superior complaining of his cruel treatment. He would have said within himself: "The Archbishop is an old man eighty years of age. He is an old fogey in more senses of the word than one. He is hopelessly out of date. What is the good of appealing to him? I will appeal to the most highly trained minds." He would not have been angry. That Bishop Barnes did act like a normal man is in his favor. He was kicked and he shouted. He was kicked again, tactfully this time, by the gentle sandal of his Archbishop. He will undoubtedly shout again. He is, as we have said, an old-fashioned Protestant who is quite out of his depth when he ranges himself with scientists. His interest in science is superficial. He thinks he has found a new argument against Rome. The old argument was that Rome hated the Bible; the new is that Rome actually believes it.

But leaving Bishop Barnes to take care of himself, which he will be able to do, for the priest-hater is usually a sturdy fellow, let us see what practical suggestions Mr. Abbott offers for the salvation of the Church. He does not fail us. He actually gives a list of sermons that must be preached if churches are to be filled and people prevented from going off to psychology. This apprehension of the danger of their going to psychology if they cannot get answers from the Church seems strange. We thought, in our innocence, that the intellectuals were all in favor of psychology. Mr. Abbott suggests three sermons that must be preached as soon as possible. Our only difficulty is that none of them can be preached without preaching dogma. We ask our readers to decide.

Sermon number one is to be on this subject: "Are human beings mere machines without any more moral responsibility than a tree or a dynamo?" Here, of course, we are up against the great theological discussion of free will. We need scarcely remind Mr. Abbott of the impossibility of settling this question without the most rigid adherence to dogmatic belief. There is no dogma so universally accepted as the belief in free will upon which depends the whole structure of society. Indeed, a preacher who opposed such a dogma might find it hard to get a congregation to listen to him, unless it were a congregation of scientific men. The proper place for such a sermon, apart from the exception that we suggest, is a madhouse. It is only in a madhouse that people think seriously that they are dynamos.

Sermon number two: "Is the life of the family to be preserved as a precious thing or shall it be discarded together with old styles of clothes?" Here again we are up against practical difficulties. If the audience is composed of those who have families or who intend to have families, we shall need lots of dogma to enable them to face such a situation. To have a family certainly means to respond to a vocation that will need much grace to support it. We will have to offer all kinds of hopes and blessings that can only be accepted by those who believe in vows, in sacraments, and in a vast number of other things. If we are speaking to those who have no families or intend to have none, we suggest that our hearers will be only potentially present, they will actually be lying abed or out for their Sunday spin.

Sermon number three: "Is the final answer to life the answer of the cynic?" Difficulties again. What is a cynic? We have an idea that a cynic is one who finds himself alive in a very unpleasant world. His only hope of being happy is to create another ideal world in his imagination, and to amuse himself by thinking how much better it is than the real one. But, of course, this would mean that there are as many final answers to life as there are cynics. And this, in turn, suggests endless disputes about cynicism that would be more acrimonious than those that are said to have taken place at General Councils.

The Weeping Siren

Around her, the unvarying plain of sea
  Stretches its boundless ranks of grey and white,
Sweeping their chilly arms up to her knee;
  Again, the arrows of Apollo's light
Beat on her pitiless from the scorching sky;
  And underneath her chiseled feet
    Is the narrow and cutting rock;
    The seagulls plunge and mock
  With one shrill cry in the cold and heat—
Atropos! can a siren never die?

Once in her brilliant youth she almost won
  Odysseus and his heroes of the sea—
No nightingale or goddess ever spun
  Such a shimmering gossamer of melody;
And he at first had yielded to her cry,
  Had struggled, shouted, but had fled;
    And as his ship went under
    The skyline, all the wonder
  Of life was withered; her heart went dead—
Atropos! can a siren never die?

One hand is buried in her dripping hair
  The other hides the smoothness of her breast;
Attempting, as her smooth hands clutch and tear,
  To slay her evil spirit of unrest
With the sword of pain, but fruitless will she try
  To kill her sorrow, for endless years:
    Forever will she be
    Tormented, and the sea
  Forever will wash away her tears—
Atropos! can a siren never die?

RICHARD LINN EDSALL.

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COMMUNICATIONS

WHY THE STUDY CLUB?

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—In his excellent article Why the Study Club? in The Commonweal for November 2, Patrick J. Ward speaks of "the comparative newness of the idea . . . in organizing and running a study club."

The type of study club which Mr. Ward and the National Catholic Welfare Conference are promoting is an innovation, to be sure, stressing as it does questions relating to citizenship and social problems. However the idea of study clubs for Catholics to show "how Catholic culture has turned to the service of God and religion all the wonders of sense and intellect" is by no means of recent birth.

Study clubs were important adjuncts of the reading circles for Catholics popular in the United States and Canada during the late eighties and early nineties. Due credit must be given the Paulist Fathers (especially to Reverend Thomas McMillan, who was a pioneer enthusiast of study clubs) for sending out suggested lists of reading and study plans to the members of their Columbian reading circle.

During the period to which I refer, reading circles were advocated and actively promoted in Philadelphia by Monsignor James F. Loughlin; in Youngstown, Ohio, by Warren E. Mosher, who made the study club a part of a national movement, the Catholic Educational Union; in Chicago, by Miss Margaret Sullivan; and in Boston, by Miss Katherine E. Conway. In New York the most active workers on behalf of the reading circles were probably Father Macmillan, the director of the Columbian circle, and Monsignor Joseph H. McMahon, director of the Cathedral Library reading circle. Brother Azarias, of De La Salle Institute, popularized the idea through the pages of the Catholic World, and in his little volume Books and Reading.

In this book were printed a list of special courses in reading suggested by the Cathedral Library reading circle, which covered such a range of topics as: The Public School Controversy in the United States; Astronomy; Oratory; Music; Sacred Scripture; The Fine Arts; Christian Evidences; Philosophy; Literature; and Spiritual Reading. These lists were all prepared by experts in the various fields.

The club Mr. Ward advocates merits support, but why narrow the scope of the questions discussed? Can we not learn something from the pioneers of the past and make another broad and brave attempt to make our Catholic people aware of their rich and exhaustive cultural heritage?

WALTER V. GAVIGAN.

FRAGMENTS OF BARDSTOWN HISTORY

Louisville, Ky.

TO the Editor:—In The Commonweal for October 5 there is an article, Fragments of Bardstown History, by Margaret Downing, which makes the error of attributing to me (unnamed) that which I have not done. It says that in a paper read before the Filson (Historical) Club I treated "rather cavalierly" the claims of the early Catholics in Bardstown that the pictures in the old pro-cathedral there "were genuine old masters and likewise royal gifts."

The paper she refers to was The Curious Legend of Louis Philippe in Kentucky, prepared by me in 1924. Nowhere in it was the genuineness of the beautiful paintings questioned or "treated rather cavalierly." The truth of the tradition that they were the gifts of Louis Philippe was alone denied. The whole paper was devoted to proving, by his own diaries and the records of Congress and the United States customs archives, that Louis Philippe was in Bardstown but one day, April 20-21, 1797; that he was not in Kentucky more than fifteen days at that time, constantly traveling; and that that prince, notoriously "close" of purse, never gave anything of value to the Church in Kentucky.

The paper has been printed and widely circulated, and speaks for itself. It has aroused much controversy, but no new facts have emerged. The paintings and other relics in the beautiful old Bardstown cathedral also speak for themselves. They preserve memories of the saintly and sensitive Flaget, the devoted and laborious Fathers Nerinckx, Badin and Chabrat, who collected the treasures and adorned the edifice.

YOUNG E. ALLISON.

Louisville, Ky.

TO the Editor:—In a recent article, Fragments of Bardstown History, by Margaret B. Downing, there is a mistake that should be corrected.

Speaking of Saint Thomas's Seminary near Bardstown, Miss Downing says: "In an old year-book of the seminary, it has recently been noted that among the boys who sought the advantages to be derived at Saint Thomas's when Bishop Flaget and Bishop David were in charge, was Jefferson Davis."

Jefferson Davis never attended Saint Thomas's Seminary. The school that he attended was seventeen miles distant, in Washington County, and in charge of the Dominican Fathers Fenwick, Wilson and Tuite.

Saint Thomas's College and Saint Thomas's Seminary are not the same and should not be confused with each other. An account of Jefferson Davis's stay at Saint Thomas's College will be found in the life of Bishop Miles, by Father O'Daniel.

SAMUEL J. BOLDRICK.

AMERICAN AS WORLD POLICY

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—I wonder if the average voter can possibly be aware of the influence of American domestic affairs upon the rest of the world.

It is alleged in Paris that the Communist Internationale had positive orders from Moscow to avoid offence to the American flag, lest public resentment here influence the policy of the next administration against recognition of the Soviet republic, and that, in consequence, demonstrators against the verdict in the Sacco-Vanzetti trial were split completely over the proposed boycott of American goods. Not only Russia is deeply interested in our coming presidential election, but Germany, France and England, each for special reasons, not to mention the South American countries, Japan and China.

It is safe to say that American policy has become truly a central world policy, and that there never has been a time when it was more necessary to consider our relations with the world in the election of a President, the appointment of a Secretary of State and the construction of an adequate national diplomatic service.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

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A DAY OF PRAYER FOR MEXICO

Milwaukee, Wis.

TO the Editor:—Now that the patronal feast of our nation, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, on December 8, is drawing near once more, it seems timely to renew the suggestion I made last year, which was quite widely carried out, that the day should be kept as a day of special prayer and effort in behalf of the suffering and martyred Church of Mexico.

Our Holy Father, in words recently uttered to the editor of The Commonweal, declared: "Nothing like this persecution has ever been known in history, not even in the first centuries of the Church. For then, even under Nero, Caligula and Domitian, there was no general persecution of private religion in homes, the catacombs or the cemeteries. But now in Mexico nothing that is Catholic is tolerated, not even the private celebration of the Mass and the administration of the sacraments, punishment for which has in many cases been the death penalty, and always fines, imprisonments and murderous outrages."

The Holy Father goes on to say: "This people of confessors and martyrs finds hardly a soul to respond to their cry for aid to save them from utter ruin, and to save all civilized nations, and indeed the whole human race, from the infamy of a savage persecution now being tolerated in the twentieth century, the boasted era of civilization and progress."

My suggestion is that every Catholic individually, and that parishes and schools collectively, celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception by prayers and special devotions for our suffering brethren in Mexico; and at the same time that each one write a personal letter to the President of the United States or to the Senator or Congressman from his district, asking simply that the influence of the United States government be employed to find, in the words of the Pope, "an opportune remedy for this disastrous social catastrophe in our neighboring nation." This prayer, and the writing of this letter, will be a personal service which each one can render, and, "if the whole press," says the Holy Father, "the whole nation of the United States can find an opportune remedy for this disastrous social catastrophe, it will merit glory in the history of civilization and religion."

REV. EDWARD F. GARESCHE, S. J.,
Editor, Hospital Progress Magazine.

BOY WORK TODAY

St. Paul, Minn.

TO the Editor:—On August 10 there appeared in The Commonweal a rather interesting article by the Reverend Kilian Hennrich in which he discussed, without names, three groups now doing boy work. While he says he does not offer an evaluation of the groups he describes, nevertheless the whole tenor of the article is such that I feel it important to answer its implications.

In the first group of which he speaks, he undoubtedly means the Boys' Brigade and the various local Catholic organizations; in the second group I recognize the Boy Scouts of America; in the third group, many organizations which cover the work of boys' clubs and so on.

Now, I cannot agree with the writer of your article in the value which he places on organizations which tend to segregate the Catholic boy from others. Our entire American life is based on the idea that our various religious groups coöperate for the welfare of the country; and to take the leisure time of boys and attempt to segregate them into Catholic groups would inevitably result in having other groups segregate Catholic boys. That is a most important thing to avoid.

Another weakness of the first group is that many Catholic boys want to join groups in which their Protestant playfellows are interested, and unless we can afford these Catholic boys an opportunity of joining organizations to which other boys belong, it is inevitable that they will regard their religion as a handicap.

This paper is not a discussion of whether this is right or not, but it presents the fact, and it is facts with which we deal when we handle boys, and not theories.

The failure of the Catholic Boys' Brigade to grow into a large national movement is due to two facts—in the first place, it offers the boy only a limited program, and secondly, it tends to segregate the boys. It offers, for example, no solution to the difficulty of the boys living in small towns where there are but few Catholics.

The Boy Scout movement, on the other hand, has met these objections in a very fair way. As to the approval of the Vatican for the Boy Scout movement, the writer of your article of August 10 should be in a better position than any one else to judge how far this movement has the approval of the Vatican, because he was privileged, on the occasion of his visit to Rome, to see the reception which the Holy Father accorded to the British Boy Scouts, and was also privileged to hear the papal address on this occasion.

I do not know what the writer means by the statement, "This group justifies some of its methods on papal pronouncements wrongly explained or applied," but it does seem that an explanation is very much in order.

I am not anxious to enter into controversy, but it does seem that work for boys offers a large enough field so that Catholic writers on boy work can write constructively on the problems which workers with boys meet, in preference to attacking efforts of other Catholics by veiled statements.

VICTOR F. RIDDER.

THE OLD POST ON THE WABASH

Kansas City, Mo.

TO the Editor:—Martha Bayard's article, The Old Post on the Wabash, which appeared in The Commonweal for October 12, was a very timely and interesting historical narrative. It adds one more link to the ever-lengthening chain of early Catholic history in the United States.

If more records could be unearthed in a similar manner, the time would not be long distant when a new history of our country would be a necessity. Even now, some of our greatest historians see the need for a revision of the standard texts. In the graduate departments of the large universities, Catholic students are called upon to make contributions from hitherto unpublished Catholic sources.

The writer's own brief observation and experience in the field of historical research have convinced him of the unlimited opportunities it offers. In the history of the Massachusetts colonies up to 1700 there are numerous instances of Catholic settlements, influence and leadership. The prejudice and ignorance of the day have isolated these facts from the general trend. May the day be not far away when such material will be presented in a scholarly fashion to the members of the important and growing American reading public.

GEORGE F. DONOVAN,
Professor of History and Government,
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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

The Good Hope

WHEN the news spread abroad that Eva Le Gallienne would continue the experiment she began last year, of repertory production on Fourteenth Street, there was considerable rejoicing among all those who like to pay tribute to courage, persistency and inspired common sense. Only those who have been in reasonably close contact with the theatre can realize the magnitude of the task Miss Le Gallienne accomplished last year. Not content to follow the Theatre Guild system of repertory in alternating weeks, she gave, after the fashion of the Metropolitan Opera Company, three and sometimes four different plays every week, rehearsing new productions while old ones were being acted, and clothing the entire enterprise with the warmth of a real love of the theatre and all it can give to people of modest means. For it will also be recalled that the prices at Miss Le Gallienne's Civic Repertory Theatre are about one-half those at the Broadway playhouses.

The outstanding surprise and delight of last season was her successful presentation of Cradle Song—that tender and wistful story of a little orphan's romance coming to flower in the protecting walls of a convent of Dominican nuns. I doubt if there is another manager in New York who would have seen in this play the possibilities for financial as well as artistic success. Possibly Miss Le Gallienne herself did not see it. She may have brought it to life, as in the case of many other plays, simply through the conviction that a thing of beauty should be given its day in the sun. In that case, it reflects even more the fine quality of her adventure and its success was all the more in the spirit of poetic justice.

With these stimulating memories, her first production of the new season attracted the widest possible interest. She selected for her opening a drama of the fisher-folk of Holland, by Hermann Heijermans. The Good Hope is a play somewhat in the crusading mood of Ibsen's Pillars of Society, by implication, at least, a bitter indictment of those who amass their personal fortunes by unnecessarily risking the lives of the humble and the obscure. Clemens Bos dispatches the ship Good Hope on her last voyage after ample warnings that her hull is beyond repair. But what with his insurance and a chance of squeezing a last few dollars of profit from the boat, he pays no attention to the warnings.

But the main value of the play—that which lifts it far above the level of mere social diatribe, or, as we should now say, propaganda—is its portrayal in compassionate human terms of the fears, the tearless bravery and the fateful resignation of the fisher-folk themselves. This almost mute drama is told through the mouths of the wives, the daughters, and the sweethearts of the fishermen. At times the telling takes too long. Miss Le Gallienne undoubtedly has a great reverence for a good author's text, but economy is one of the cardinal necessities of the theatre and The Good Hope is burdened with rather too many old wives' tales.

At many moments, however, the play rises to great theatrical power, thanks in part to the much improved acting company which Miss Le Gallienne has assembled this year. The improvement is particularly marked among the men. Mr. Egon Brecher still labors under the handicap of his strong foreign accent, which makes it difficult at times to catch the full meaning of his lines, but his characterizations are always interesting and Clemens Bos is among his best. Distinctly the finest performance of the play, with the possible exception of Alma Kruger's is that of Donald Cameron as the recklessly outspoken son of a drowned fisherman. Mr. Cameron is a very worthwhile addition to the Le Gallienne company. Alma Kruger, as his widowed mother, has a strongly emotional though not entirely pleasing part to play. She is to the last degree a self-centered and self-pitying woman with a fear of public opinion which, in one very important scene, transcends even her maternal instincts. There probably are many such characters, but to the very extent that they alienate the sympathy of the audience, they fail to serve the best dramatic purpose—unless, of course, the play itself is meant to center about the problem of this type of woman. Miss Kruger's work is admirable, rescuing as it does much of the sympathy which the author has thrown away. Miss Le Gallienne herself, as the niece, gives a fresh, open and at times very strong characterization with a quality of spontaneity and great naturalness. Leona Roberts, in one short scene, gives another striking evidence of the great height of her artistry. The settings for this play are by Cleon Throckmorton and contribute vastly to its atmospheric power. The implications of the story, aside from its main theme, are not without bitterness. There are moments when the author seems to be preaching the futility of faith. (At the Civic Repertory Theatre.)

Escape

THIS play—reputed to be John Galsworthy's farewell to the theatre—was given with considerable success in London. Winthrop Ames, American producer-in-chief to Mr. Galsworthy, has given it a splendid mounting and an exceedingly competent cast. In purely theatrical terms, it is an exceedingly gripping story of the attempted escape of a rather romantic convict, and of his ultimate voluntary surrender when he finds what his concealment would cost one of his generous protectors. In terms other than pure theatre, the story suffers from the same false sentimentality with which Mr. Galsworthy garnished his well-remembered play, Old English.

In a prologue we see Matt Denant (Leslie Howard) rushing to the defense of a street walker whom a plain clothes man has caught plying her trade in Hyde Park. The detective accidentally hits his head falling against a railing, and is killed. Denant, refusing to run away, is arrested and sent up for manslaughter. The rest of the ten episodes are taken up with his attempt at escape. The people he runs into are evidently intended to portray the gamut of human types. Of each type Mr. Galsworthy virtually asks the question "If you were to meet an escaped convict, concerning whose imprisonment there might be some injustice, what would you do? Turn him over to the authorities or speed him on his way?"

Some of the people the convict meets have a clear recollection of the circumstances of his conviction, others are entirely ignorant of them. But Mr. Galsworthy has so carefully engaged the sympathy of his audience for Matt Denant that the natural tendency is to applaud his rescuers and to despise, as unthinking bigots, all those who try to send him back to prison. This, I believe, is the essential falsity of Mr. Galsworthy's technique. In Old English he similarly engaged all the sympathy for an old reprobate and made all his opponents stand forth as odious

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Puritans. This is a form of literary special pleading which is just as vicious in its way as pretending that all heroes are angels with glowing wings, and all villains black monsters with cloven hoofs. To stick to purely literary standards, it is a sin against the integrity of characterization. It partakes of trickery and is essentially dishonest. The fact that Mr. Galsworthy may conceal a great many truths of Christian charity and forgiveness under this false mask does not make the mask any truer. His method has more craft than craftsmanship.

Mr. Leslie Howard gives a surpassingly fine and sensitive portrayal of Denant. One feels it is a great good fortune to see an actor of his ability in a part of greater substance than the ones he has been languishing in for the last two years. Throughout the play, indeed, Mr. Ames has done an admirable bit of casting. Nearly every performer is worthy of some mention. But in the process of forced selection, one can pick out particularly the engaging freshness of Frieda Inescort, the quiet understanding of Lawrence Hanray, and the brief moments of Henrietta Goodwin, as the girl in the prologue. The scenic effects are all exceptionally fine. (At the Booth Theatre.)

Behold This Dreamer

ARE the bars of a lunatic asylum meant to shut in the lunatics or to shut out the insane world which lies beyond them? Perhaps if you had been Charley Turner, if you had been compelled to be a clerk in a brush factory instead of a painter, as you wanted to be, if your wife had been a brainless little henpeck, and her father, sisters, cousins and aunts had tried to rule every moment of your life—then you might have come to the same conclusion as the said Charley Turner and have returned joyfully to the one place where you were allowed to do just about as you pleased.

The sanity of the insane and the insanity of the sane is not a particularly original theme. In fact there is not enough to it to supply the meat for a full-length play. In spite of Fulton Oursler's many heavy-handed attempts as author to keep things going, and in spite, too, of some occasional good acting by Glenn Hunter, and some continuously good acting by Sylvia Field, the whole bag of tricks becomes monotonous by the end of scene two.

There is one delightfully ironic moment at the end of this second scene when cocktails are served to the inmates of the sanatorium, accompanied by the strains of Long, Long Ago. This is the high spot of the play. It is the moment when the perfectly sane Charley Turner finds his insane companions the best of company. But after this there is no surprise left. To be sure, on the advice of his self-appointed lunatic committee, Charley does paint a picture with his left hand in the super-post-impressionist manner, dubs it Nude with Pineapple and finds that it wins him a $5,000 prize. And there are many other touches not without their native point. Shortly after his arrival at the sanatorium, little Melodie (Sylvia Field) a melancholia patient, brings him a letter from the committee of the inmates who call themselves The Intelligentsia. This committee puts Turner through a strict cross-examination to make sure he is not a rotarian, a lodge brother or any other unfit companion. But there is a rather unhealthy twist to some of the satire—and unfortunately Mr. Glenn Hunter does not seem to take his part too seriously. As the phrase goes, he tries to "kid the show." Miss Field is surpassingly sincere and elusive, and that fine old comedian Thomas A. Wise, almost rescues the play as a humorous gentleman with a mania for strangling himself with neckties. (At the Cort Theatre.)

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BOOKS

John Sargent, by Evan Charteris. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $6.00.

IMPARTIAL as a critic and sensitive as an historian, Mr. Evan Charteris has with great care drawn a vivid, appreciative picture of Sargent's personal life, giving in its frank delineation an insight into his character and works. The story is rich in anecdotes and pictures, revealing from early childhood to the completion of his accomplished life a personality both appealing and of unusual probity.

No boy ever had more perfect means or richer opportunities than did this lively and precocious child. Possessed to an unusual degree of an observant and sensitive intelligence, he was thrown into a world full of cultural possibilities and surroundings. Added to this, his natural instinct for occupation and the development of his tastes were encouraged and fostered by his mother. Through Italy, France, England, Spain and Germany the family were continually traveling during those early, formative years in which the boy was steeping himself with an endless succession of impressions and influences which were to serve as the basis of his artistic career.

An extraordinarily strong physique, coupled with an alert and lively disposition, a delicate sense of humor and a poised and balanced mind, gave him a deep appreciation of whatever life had to give. So full an equipment is rare in an artistic temperament, and to this is due much of the sanity and integrity of his work, as well as the charm which runs through much of his painting. To the geniality and kindliness of his temperament may also be attributed its happy and vigorous quality. His musical friends, of whom he had many, considered him unusually talented; certainly his great love for and interest in music colored both his life and his art. The ease and rhythm of his line and composition are often quite musical in their flow and arrangement. Through the whole story there is not a single note of sadness, disappointment or discouragement. As we have seen, his work reflects this ease of living but possibly the work might have been raised to a higher plane had the accomplishment been attained by some such struggle as the great men have often had to go through to reach their goal.

Critics who are sometimes the least capable of judging works of art fairly are divided concerning the value of Sargent's contributions as a painter of portraits. In this branch of his work he seems most uneven, and there is the greatest divergence of opinion concerning it; but be that as it may, it will be a very prejudiced critic who would not admit that the painter rises to great heights and undeniable masterfulness in a large number of his portraits. Unfortunately, Sargent never wholly got rid of the worldly influence of Carolus Duran, tinged with the superficial and even commonplace. The technical knowledge he acquired from him was not worth the price he paid for it. He was made for better things.

On the subtle question of color, Mr. Charteris is less positive about Sargent's position. One feels he may take it somewhat for granted.

For direct color representation Sargent has few to equal him. His magical power of recording the visible world about him, with a charm and a force quite undeniable, place him on a plane by himself, but true as the color may be, and fascinating as is this remarkable accomplishment, one may search through an enormous amount of it without finding color used in a truly lyrical manner—the manner of a great colorist, with its evasive imaginative quality, and its record of an unusual sensation evoked and established. One has only to recall the great masters to realize what their subtleties are and what unaccountably mysterious impression they leave upon those who have the eyes to see and feel it. The record is a long one and goes back far in the history of the world. In our own time we have a Besnard, and again in a curiously different manner, our own Homer, in whose direct representation in water-color one finds this quality expressed in a powerful and unforgettable manner.

In Sargent's decorative paintings the opportunities for color passages were many but the color is not exceptional, and though it is often rich and harmonious, it fails in great distinction. In the ceiling of the Boston Museum there is a decided lack of color inspiration. In the Boston Library, however, one may make a marked exception. The Astarte panel is full of subtle color harmonies, suggestive of the mystery and wonder of its complicated subject.

Mr. Charteris enters little into the subject of Sargent's decorative work; the longest discussion of it is found in a footnote where he describes the Boston Library paintings. The space which Sargent decorated there has been spoken of as the "American Sistine Chapel." This is as ridiculous as it is misleading. Sargent and the great Florentine were as far apart as the two poles. While one never interested himself in the abstract unless compelled to, the other lived in a supernatural world. The effort Sargent was making throughout most of this undertaking is apparent. The work is stamped by the evidence of marked cultivation and intellectuality, but notwithstanding, it hardly rises to great spiritual heights.

When he approaches the New Testament he seems most out of his depth, and resorts to his great skill and mastery as a painter to pull himself through. The Madonna as the Catholic sees her made little appeal to him. The two representations—one an imitation of an Italian style, the other a Spanish type—have little suggestion of their true significance. Though the painter inspired himself with the motif of that most imaginative personality, Donatello, there is no suggestion of either the conviction or the wonder of the original in the representation. The other, a masterful trompe d'oeil of a Spanish-doll figure, recalls only those rather absurd, dressed-up images familiar in Spanish churches. By his Puritan inheritance the cult of Mary must have been almost anathema to Sargent, and he avoided the difficulty as best he could, with a skilful imitation.

There is mention in the book by letter and otherwise of Sargent's difficulty in regard to his figure of the Synagogue. He defends himself in speaking of the expected visit from a resentful member of the Jewish colony by saying: "I can only refer him to Rheims, Notre Dame, Strasbourg, and other cathedrals. . . ." This reference could not have entirely justified the liberties he took with the subject, nor have explained his apparent misunderstanding of it. Sargent's painting represents a rather brutal and crushed figure, which in her fallen and broken state expresses an uncompromising and resentful attitude, so that one can understand and sympathize with the Jews in their disapproval of it. It would be difficult to find any such representation in mediaeval work. The subject is quite familiar in the sculptures, stained glass, bas reliefs and illuminations, but invariably we see a graceful figure, full of charm and with a look of wistful, plaintive beauty. The attitude of the Church in those days was the same as that

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of the present time, and in its representations there was never intended any slur upon the Jewish race, but rather kindliness and true appreciation of the sacred trust guarded faithfully by it down to the Christian era.

Vernon Lee's chapter, In Memoriam, is written in a whimsical, fascinating style and is rather a sharp contrast to Mr. Charteris's ordered and analytical pages. Her picture of the "Sargent boy" is delightful. Her statement that he "never drew from memory" is in accordance with what is in the rest of the book and supports the author's critique of Sargent's work. Direct representation was the absorbing interest of his life, and he applied himself to it with unremitting diligence. It is hard to say what he would have done had he also been possessed of a creative imagination. Perhaps he might have painted the world about him with a beauty comparable to that envisaged by the great Watteau.

BANCEL LA FARGE.

Arrow Release Distributions, by A. L. Kroeber; Yahi Archery, by Saxton T. Pope; A Study of Bows and Arrows, by Saxton T. Pope. The University of California Press.

READING Professor Kroeber's recent addition to this interesting series, I am reminded of an amusing incident which occurred shortly after I had published A County Manual of Shropshire, in England. In referring to the courtyard of the noble castle at Ludlow, where Milton's Comus was written and first performed, I had mentioned that the yard was occupied by the Archers of the Teme. This brought me a letter from a lady asking me whether I thought that she, whose maiden name was Archer, could be related to this family. I was obliged to disappoint her by telling her that the Archers in question were a society of persons interested in the bow and arrow and calling themselves after the river which runs at the base of the fortress. It is one of various clubs of the same kind in England—the Foresters of Arden were one of them—institutions which flourished more abundantly in mid-Victorian days.

In civilized countries that is about all that is left of what was once the most important arm of warfare, an arm with which were fought and won more battles than have ever been since war was waged with "villainous saltpetre" and its later substitutes. And in this connection let us not forget that Benjamin Franklin long hesitated as to whether the soldiers of the American Revolution should be armed with bows and arrows or with flint-lock guns, finally deciding on the latter. The bow has been in use all over the world. The man of the Old Stone Age had it, though Mr. Wells is doubtful about this in print. Why he should be, when in the same volume he figures a cave painting of these same men using bows and arrows with great effectiveness, it is difficult indeed to understand.

Mr. Morse, whose paper in the Bulletins of the Essex Society (Salem) is a classical performance, showed that there were exactly five ways of holding the arrow or, as it is usually put, of arrow release. The ordinary child or man will, it is a thousand to one, hold the arrow between his thumb and his bent index finger. That is a common method among many primitive peoples, and seems to be the instinctive one. But it is the weakest for practical purposes and it is not that which the English bowmen, who won so many victories with their accurate shooting, employed. Their form of release is called the Mediterranean, and consists in holding the string with the bent index and next two fingers, the arrow being between the first two and the thumb not entering into the

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grip at all. That is the strongest form of pull. It was used as far back as the twentieth dynasty in Egypt and by other ancient peoples, as Professor Kroeber shows in the interesting monograph named above.

The other powerful release is called the Mongolian; here the string is pulled with the bent thumb (which was formerly shielded by a special ring). The Mongols were skilled horsemen, the best in the world and the earliest, the originators of cavalry—or rather of mountain infantry, since they used their horses for rapid approach to the enemy and then their bows for destroying him. Obviously they could not on horse-back use longbows, as did the English footmen. Their bows were short and built up of elastic substances, such as horn, and backed by sinew. Moreover they were shaped like what we call a Cupid's bow. But they were immensely powerful. The record flight of modern days—459 yards—made by Simon in France in 1914, was made with an old Turkish bow. Pope too made his longest flight with a Turkish bow. Though called the Tartar bow from the place of its origin, this type spread, as Professor Wissler has shown in Man and Culture, right across Europe to Spain and in the other direction into North America, throughout the eastern portion of which it was extensively used.

The longbow of the English archer, dear to Robin Hood, Clym of the Cleugh and other heroes, was a very different weapon. It was just under six feet in length and made of yew, the best material in the world for such a purpose for it has far greater resilience than steel. Curiously enough the latter metal is not good for bow purposes though it was used in crossbows. Incidentally, it is odd to realize that when crossbows first came into use they were thought such unfair weapons for warfare that the Pope was called upon to forbid their use.

But to return to yew. The trunk has two parts, a red heart wood which is highly resilient, and a white sap wood which is very tough, very resistant to fracture and possessed of great ductile strength. Hence this part is used for the back of the bow, where it acts like the sinew in built-up bows, while the red wood forms the belly or inner part. The traveler through rural England cannot fail to note in how many country churchyards there are yew trees. Tradition says that they were planted there to supply the necessary materials for the national weapon.

The cloth-yard arrows were twenty-seven and one-half inches in length and originally provided with what were called broad heads, that is, what we think of as typical arrow heads. But later the bodkin head was employed which, as Pope has shown, will penetrate the kind of breastplate worn by Roman soldiers at ten yards, and a chain mail tunic at seven.

The same inquirer, in investigating the value of the bow as a hunting implement, has killed a deer at fifty yards and a grizzly bear a sixty from a blind. But his most exciting performance was shooting through the heart a charging grizzly female at forty yards. Thus for war and for the chase the bow was a thoroughly reliable weapon, and had the advantage of being almost silent and producing no cloud of smoke. Pope mentions that Hiawatha was by legend supposed to be able to shoot ten shafts into the air before the first had fallen to earth. Catlin certainly says that the Mandans could keep eight in the air at the same time. Ishi, Pope's Yahi Indian, an expert, could just discharge his third before the first had fallen, which comes far short of the other performances.

BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE.

The Women of the Medici, by Yvonne Maguire. New York: The Dial Press. $4.00.

IN THE background of the dark period of the renaissance, strangely termed by those who lived its years as an advance over "sombre mediaevalism," flitted three shadows, rather pathetic figures, about whose lives little has been written. This study of a hidden side of the renaissance, made through the epistolary archives of Florence, reveals the sadness of the lot of the wives of the political leaders of Italy, "men without women" as it were. For Cosimi, Piero and Lorenzo paid little attention to the women upon whom they conferred their name.

The first of the three, the Contessina de' Barli, Cosimo's wife, was a good wife and a good housekeeper, but played little part in the history of the nation which her husband was plundering by crushing his enemies to the wall with financial ruin. We find her writing her sons "I think you will need your summer clothes"; "tell Piero that he must buy a straw hat this summer"; "tell Lucrezia I will have the baby's petticoat relined and that she will have it by Monday"; or ending with "kiss the babies for me," or the familiar "written in haste"—letters which are more like contemporary missives than those of that century. Only complaints as to the post service, and the customary close, "Christ guard you" and "I commend myself to you" reveal antiquity.

Piero's wife, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, was a step in advance of her mother-in-law. With the passing years, increased mental cultivation led to a growing interest in public affairs on the part of woman, and Lucrezia became a highly cultivated lady, who not only wrote poetry and mixed with the eminent leaders of literature and politics, but managed her husband's estates while he was abroad. Her letters, however, are essentially of the same scope as Contessina's.

The saddest of the three, little Clarice Orsini, the "foreigner," was married, as a result of lengthy political arrangement, to Lorenzo, who celebrated his espousal by participating in a tournament in honor of a lady in whom he was far more interested at the time. Betrothals of five- and six-year-old children were not uncommon; Clarice was sixteen when Lucrezia went to Rome to look at her, and to write back to her husband, "I think that whatever you and he (Lorenzo) are agreed upon will be all right," followed by the glaring hypocrisy, "Let us leave it to God to guide us right," and the pathetic afterthought, "Her name is Clarice."

Clarice bore her husband ten children, all but three of whom lived; consequently she had little time for politics. She seems to have passed through life in constant fright of her lord and master, too pious to fathom his controversy with the papal states, too maidenly to allow herself to suffer at his wildness, writing on one occasion of abandonment: "I wish you would come and spend an evening here for many reasons, especially because I cannot believe your business keeps you so tied there as you would have me think."

As revelations of the habits of the times, as reflections of a family constantly suffering with "asthma and eczema" (as the doctors of the period called their ills) and spending more than half their days in the baths, as a means of insight into their topics of petty gossip—birth, marriage, death, feasts and fasting, gifts, acknowledgments and clothes—the letters are interesting documents. They are poignant, too, with their asterisks of loneliness. But they fail to prove what the author suggests in her conclusion, that the course of history actually was influenced by these three women's existence.

JAMES E. TOBIN.

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Oliver Cromwell: A Character Study, by John Drinkwater. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.50.

IN HIS introduction Mr. Drinkwater decries the fact that so passionate a man as Oliver Cromwell has been chronicled with so passionless an accent. Yet this is exactly what he himself has done. With all its beauty of thought and language (Mr. Drinkwater is first and foremost a poet) this biography is what absolute biography, perhaps, should be, sane, just, reasonable. Here is none of the fiery fanaticism with which red-hot apologists rush into print. But man, being what he is, "though he knows better," loves the partisan.

The best part of the book is preëminently the best, just as Cromwell's earlier work (before the despotism of the Protectorate) brought out the best that was in the man. We are given here an exceptional picture of the time and the man, interrelated as they were; of an Oliver Cromwell slowly emerging from the country squire into the war lord that was to be, with his new model army "one of the romantic wonders of the world." But Oliver Cromwell is not the only man who has led his nation through a crisis. When the sharply defined edges, distinctly white, distinctly black at the beginning, become blurred; when the great movement of a people falls into the narrow rut of shabby politics; when whatever war there was is over and reconstruction has begun—these are the times that try men's souls. And with this inevitable aftermath the soul that was Oliver Cromwell's could not cope. Mr. Drinkwater is quite unprejudiced—too unprejudiced, perhaps, for the avowed chronicler of a "splendid hero"—in his careful delineation of the marked deterioration here. But, for that matter, no one can explain away the dark stigma of Drogheda, of Wexford. This, according to the text, "it is not our business to excuse or palliate," but only to see how it came about through conflicting elements in character. The author proceeds to do this in a way so cool, so becalmed, as it were, that it remains entirely unconvincing.

This book may not be designed as history. Yet behind Cromwell is the story of England, not only "England bound in with the triumphant sea," but the many Englands in our world of today. The poet in John Drinkwater lifts all of this above the scuffle of politics, into well-composed valuations of the very countryside which nurtured the young Cromwell, an easterly, serene country where "beauty has to be slowly learnt, sought out, waited upon." Step by step we are led through that period of fumbling bewilderment until stern necessity in the affairs of men evolved the Ironsides, giving a lasting grandeur to the Puritans, with all their austerities of fanaticism.

Mr. Drinkwater feels that, in spite of the bitter tenor of religion then, too much stress should not now be laid upon it. An irreconcilable difference between sects was but the daily battle. The opposition to Catholicism, on the whole less than to the Established Church in their own midst, was a national dread of foreign domination. This is scarcely to be wondered at, with Drake's old ship, the Pelican—symbol to them of a mighty past—still lying in the quiet Thames. As for the likable but luckless Stuart pictured here, it must be true that those whom the gods destroy they first make mad. In an earlier book Mr. Drinkwater has already shown how constitutional government came first to the English, through the restoration of the second Charles.

It is refreshing in this age of the iconoclast to note Mr. Drinkwater's debt to Thomas Carlyle. For this help he makes grateful acknowledgment, while including the occasional quotation that betrays the humorist. John Morley has it—this being at variance with the present biography—that Cromwell

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was the last of the mediaevals rather than the first of the moderns. It was his destiny to be in control when the sovereign power was transferred from the Crown to Parliament. Nor should his work be minimized despite the fact that constitutional construction has proceeded along lines that Cromwell himself heartily despised. This result is common throughout the history of representative government. One sentence of John Morley's more nearly captures what might serve as a final verdict (could such be reached) on Oliver Cromwell, than this whole book, so finely, so easily written, manages to convey:

"It is our true wisdom to learn how to combine sane and equitable historic verdicts with a just value for those eternal qualities of high endeavor, on which amid all changes of fashion, formula, direction, fortune, in all times and places the world's best hopes depend!"

MARTHA BAYARD.

The Promised Land, by Ladislas Reymont; translated by M. H. Dziewicki. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $5.00.

"GRÜNSPAN, though you're a sly old dog, I have the highest esteem for you," says one of the meanest characters in Reymont's two-volume study of industrial life to his prospective father-in-law. That is the way people take one another in these books. They are all sly—and they are all dogs. The city of Lodz, awhirr with mills and cotton goods, is their bone at which they gnaw for gold. Though he was at heart as romantic as any of the great poets of his race, Reymont's tremendous canvas is bitterly bleak. If he has a hero it is Boroviecki, genius among textile manufacturers, who tramples upon men and women, ultimately upon his own soul. Sometimes he pauses momentarily and does a work of kindness. The motivating power in these cases is unconscious, atavistic. When he thinks, it is to realize that like Bucholz, his earliest employer, and all the rest, he must heap up millions. Nevertheless his essential, racial self is something the fire of covetousness cannot utterly destroy. In the end he sees it standing within himself, much like the trunk of a charred tree; and by an ordinance of mercy he is permitted to bring forth some shreds of human green.

What shall one say of the whole passionately conceived narrative? It has none of the earthiness, mystery and tenderness of The Peasants. In its drama nature takes no part, excepting to appear now and then as a melancholy piper off-stage, suggesting the restful, unplumbed glory of a country night. These terrible factory wheels spin and rumble on, till the very words men speak have a mechanical sound, are smudgy from spilling grease-cups. Reymont hated them with a fury much deeper even than the venom of his descriptions, deeper, possibly, than he himself knew. It is the soul of a whole people which here wrestles with its tormentor. The Pole who has lived close to the soil realizes with incomparable bitterness that he has been thrust into a maw from which there is no escape. His indictment may not be altogether fair. But (and here is the point at which Reymont's novel differs from so many other studies of industrialized living) the mood is elemental, the situations are real. It is a "hymn of hate," but the hymn rings true.

From a universal point of view, Reymont is right, I think, in leaving the conviction that life as Lodz knew it destroys the beauty of love. Heart cannot speak to heart in the midst of these heaps of shoddy goods, this noise. That is a fact which has come more and more fully to the surface in all our important age-of-industry literature. It is the point made, consciously or otherwise, by Zola, Wassermann, Dreiser and their company. The faces of Nausicaa and Nicolette do not bloom behind factory palings—at least for long. The Promised Land is a place through which Miecio Vysocki, incarnation of Polish idealism, goes dreaming and doing good. His love, however, is not fulfilled. Neither is that of Anka, the proud, sensitive, beautiful and good. In the end, the fires of ambition have consumed all this. The ashes are sometimes ghastly.

These books were meant to stamp a lesson upon you and they do. Yet I think one loves them most for the little interludes of gentleness which come as the sun might rest fantastically, luminously, upon the gables of a rickety house. Where else excepting in Reymont could one find a scene to compare with Vysocki's coming upon the dying peasant who fancies him an angel in disguise? The country priest and his friends play cards and insult one another fearfully all the while; Max Baum, who has a soul, listens to the voices from the marsh and dreams of love; and there are other things, as plaintive and as touched with misty grace. The Promised Land is a novel in which a male heart beat fast; and it was a great, proud, universal heart.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

The Bright Threshold, by Janet Ramsay. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.00.

Black Stream, by Nathalie Colby. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

Bugles in the Night, by Barry Benefield. New York: The Century Company. $2.00.

ONE might call Miss Ramsay's Bright Threshold "The Story That Was Never Told." Its great possibilities—it is the story of a girl who, in this age of youth's freedom, comes into her twenties without youthful companionship and is then thrown upon her own responsibility in artistic circles—are overlooked. Miss Ramsay chooses instead the thesis that we never escape the environment of childhood: and then forces her character, who had a most unusual youth, into usual banalities. Except for the first few chapters, the novel affords very dull reading.

It is a relief to turn from it to the new work by the author of Green Forest. Mrs. Colby, with fine moralist fury, has provided a sordid picture of New York's grasping social life, told, as was to be expected from her previous work, in the approved Virginia Woolf manner. It is undeniable that the novel has power, but it is equally evident that Mrs. Colby strove diligently for that power. With the entire action occurring within twenty-four hours, with each character viewed in the stream-of-consciousness manner by half a dozen other characters, with retribution following swiftly upon the heels of sin, the effect of the book is to make one wish that Mrs. Colby would not conceal her evident talent by such flagrant artificiality.

And so it is with still greater pleasure that this reviewer turns to Barry Benefield's chivalrous romance of Easley Wheatley, Confederate private, and the tall white girl he rescues; of the pair's flight from Louisiana to New York; of their retreat, "always in good order," from the city to a rotting scow lying off a Brooklyn garbage dump; and of what happens to them there after an amnesia victim is given shelter. Those readers who know Mr. Benefield's Chicken Wagon Family are acquainted with his Barriesque delicacy, his sympathy and quiet beauty. Even the too-frequent coincidences can be pardoned in a story in which "the army of the Right" and "the army of the Left" respond so nobly to bugles blowing in the night.

LURTON BLASSINGAME.

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. Lamb.

"Cousin Andromache for fifteen years has refused to call on Cousin Euphrosyne, and all because of the latter's resolve to outbid her at the auction of old Grand-uncle Louis's family furniture, when Euphrosyne ran the price of an antiquated tea canister up to $25, though it was really worth about $.25, or at least, Andromache said so." Dr. Angelicus was speaking. "As guardian of our family heirlooms Andromache will admit no rival. Her house has become a gathering place of inherited, borrowed, purchased and purloined bric-à-brac, furniture and old portraits in oil or daguerreotype, stuffed parrots and canary birds, lambrequins and antimacassars—a collection that has earned for her the post of president of the Antiquarian Society of Spoolville, and the flattering approval of Dr. Jennifer, curator of the Museum for the Preservation of American Interior Decorations in the local agricultural college. . . .

"Indeed, on my death (for am I not the last male representative of the pioneer Spoolville family of Angelicuses?) she has, I am told by Cousin Euphrosyne, agreed to hand over to the Museum the inherited residue of our family treasure, ignoring the claims of Cousin Euphrosyne and her branch of the family to the mahogany sideboard, the dining-room chairs and the green majolica vases that Grandmother Peterson inherited from her Sicilian grand-aunt back in 1840.

"You know, Britannicus, the venom that can be congealed in certain of our female relatives when it comes to the distribution of the family jewelry and the waxed flowers of our grandparents' back parlors. Charges of trickery and dishonesty of a meanness almost incredible have passed between Euphrosyne and Andromache. I have maintained a dignified silence regarding all my own claims to the portrait by Sully of my grandfather, Professor Peter Angelicus, which, privately, I don't mind telling you, I have promised to the Literary Society of Physicians and Surgeons, of which he was a founder member. It hangs in Andromache's hallway over the old stand with the leather pails he used when he was a member of the volunteer fire department of Spoolville, together with the framed resolutions that were presented to him by that organization on his seventy-fifth birthday. As an Angelicus of the seventh generation I think it really belongs to me, but I should as readily think of carrying off some of Grandmother Priscilla's silver spoons or the carved Chinese set of chess which Professor Peter obtained while he was on missionary service at Canton, as to suggest even the ghost of a claim in the presence of Andromache, their guardian and possessor.

"What was my surprise, then, to find that the resignation with which I regarded Andromache's possession of our family relics was not altogther the amiable virtue of patience and the acceptance of her as the treasurer of our history, but rather the dread of domestic scenes and the supine surrender to a personality all too much fashioned after Mussolini and the Napoleonic dictatorships. For when young Scylla and Charybdis took advantage of their mother's absence at one of the political gatherings her Woman's League has been organizing, and led me upstairs to show me how they have done ever their boudoirs, I beheld dear old Grandmother Peterson's four-posted bed of rare Jamaica mahogany painted a fine shade of Nile green, the old Swiss clock with its bronze shepherdess disguised in the same shade, and our lovely little rosewood chairs all in the accursed Nile green shynolak and

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varnishes. The white porcelain cat that used to stand on my nursery mantel was also in Nile green, with a ribbon of the same color around its neck. My picture frames were japalacked until I hardly knew them for the dear brown walnut frames that used to hold the old engravings from Milton's Paradise Lost. They were now filled up with posters in strong colors showing French damsels dressing beside the seashore, and hunting-scenes with red-jacketed horsemen jumping over incredible hedges of black and yellow. This was Scylla's adaptation of our hereditary treasures.

"In Charybdis's room things were really worse; vermilion and black were her chosen colors, with American Indian mattings and Grand-uncle Louis's double coach of birdseye maple transformed into a glaring conflagration that would have shamed old Montezuma's bed of roses. Grandmother Priscilla's old lacquer bureau had been deprived of its mirror and painted in red and black stripes; the gold ormolu on the Peterson family clock had also been covered with red shynolak until, with its white face, it seemed crowned with the curls of some scarlet bacchante; not the leg of a chair, nor the handle of a dish, nor a picture frame, could escape this young interior-decorator and her can of patent varnish.

"'Doesn't it all look fresh and new, uncle?' asked the roguish little iconclast, 'you can hardly recognize the old things now, they seem so smart and up-to-date. Sister and I have worked out the whole scheme of colors quite without mother's help. Don't you think our rooms are wonderful? Nothing more than two shades of shynolak and some varnish. It's all quite simple, uncle; we want mother to do over the sofa in the drawing-room in yellow, and to drape grandma's camel's hair shawls over the baluster, and take those awful old pails out of the hallway, as our boy friends are always using them for their cigarette butts. The house is going to look jolly smart when we get through with it.'

"What could I say, Britannicus? I had only to sigh and answer, 'My dear girls, if that's the way you want it, go ahead. Swing your shynolak and varnishes; cut the tops off the old dressers; paint the white porcelains any color you prefer. Be happy, girls; live your life; let home be your home, not the haunted garrets of your grandparents or the museums of genealogical addicts. Put forth your cigarette trays and hide the imperial Vienna cuspidors; file away the Rogers groups with the Teddy bears, and indulge yourselves instead with billikins. Be young, in a word, be barbarous, be happy—let shame say what it will.'"

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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